ACALANES
BLUEPRINT
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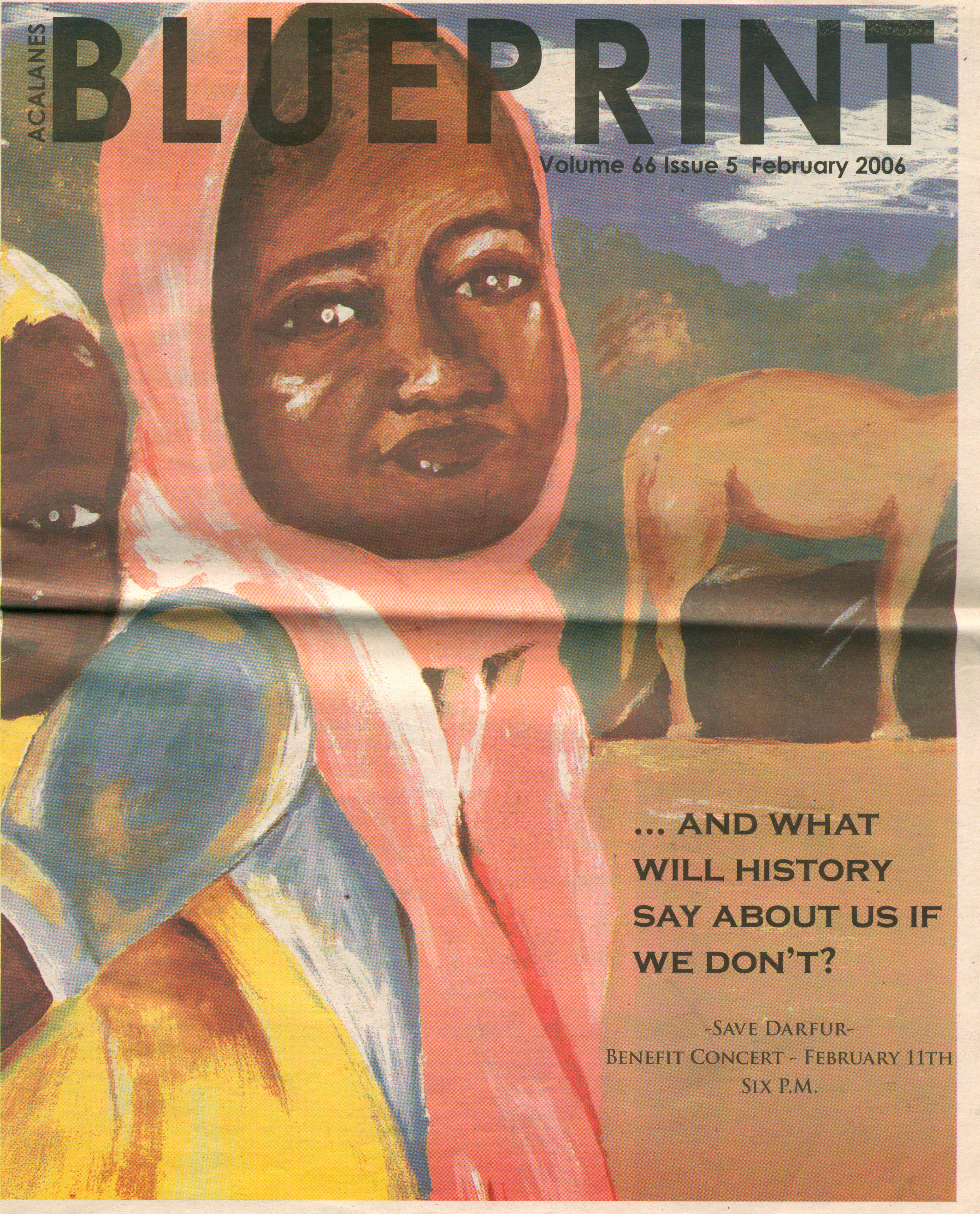

... AND WHAT WILL HISTORY SAY ABOUT US IF WE DON'T?

-SAVE DARFUR-
BENEFIT CONCERT - FEBRUARY 11TH
SIX P.M.

ACALANES BLUEPRINT

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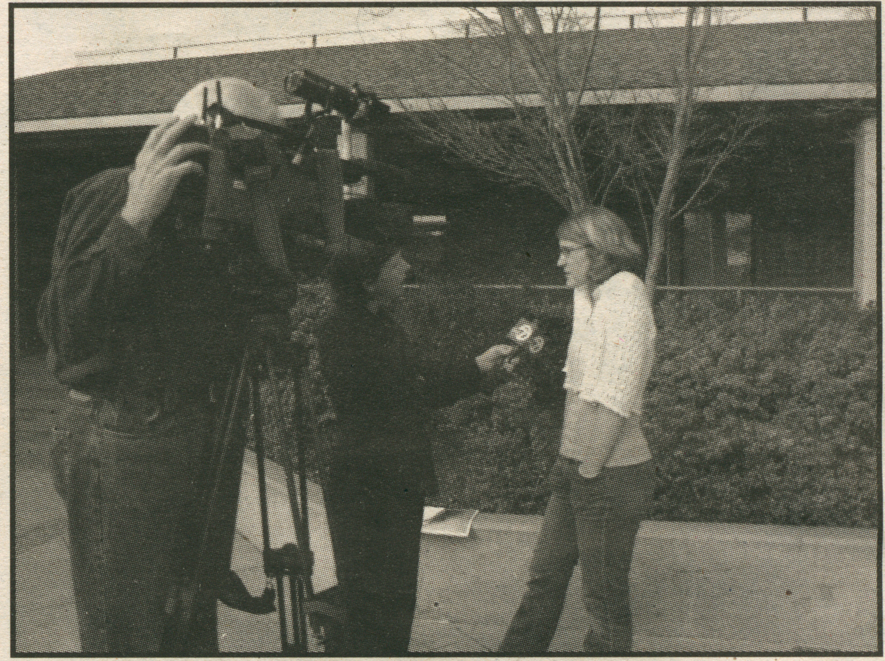

Blueprint Photo/ Ali Cellini

ABC Channel Seven interviews Opinion Editor Ellie Fox Friday, February 3rd. The news reported on Blueprint's recent coverage of methamphetamine use in the Acalanes Union High School District. Interviews aired later that night.

On the cover...

Acalanes takes action to help stop genocide in Darfur. See page 6 to learn how you can help, even by simply enjoying your Saturday night.

Blueprint Cover Illustration/ Sophie Benjamins

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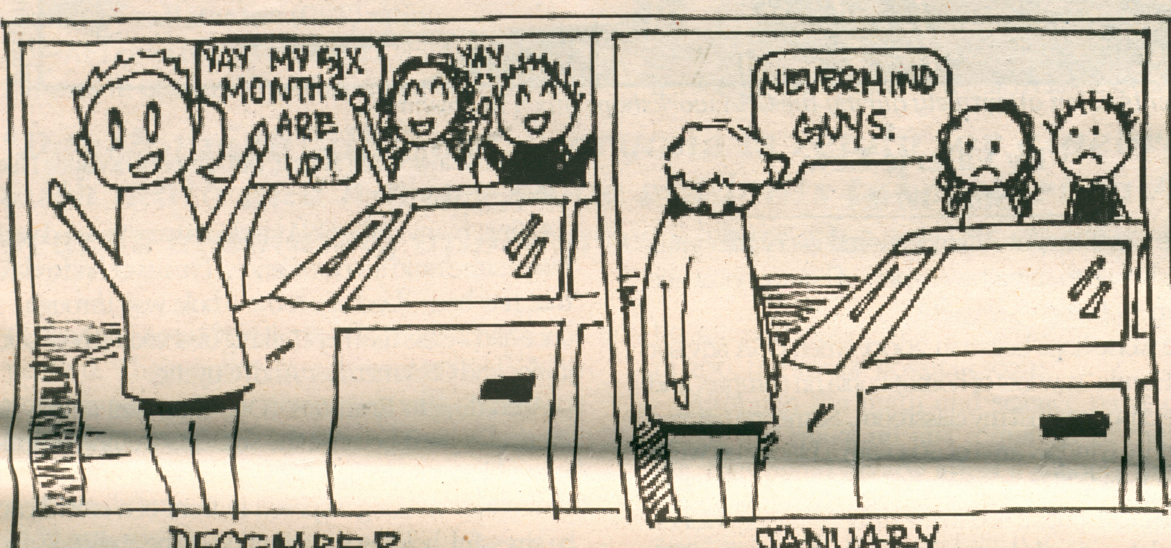
...And The Law Won

New driving restrictions for provisional licenses

By Arjun Srivatsa
Staff Writer

So you're cruisin' along, driving your friends home because it is too late for their parents to pick them up. It's dark, but you've made sure your parents are confident that you can drive safely. You have had your license for 10 months, and it feels like you were born to drive.

The red and blue flash and the fun is over. A cop has been tailing you and is now trying to pull you over. You think to yourself, 'Did I run a red? Is my taillight working? This has to be a minor traffic violation.' You tell your friends to be quiet as you reach in your pocket for your license. You explain to the cop that you haven't been doing anything wrong and all you were doing was driving your friends home safely. The cop grins and says, "Exactly."



Blueprint Cartoon/ Sophie Benjamins

The California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) initiated a new law restricting privileges for teens with a driver's license. The new law, California Vehicle Code Section 12812.6, lengthens the period of time that a teenage driver under the age of 18 is prohibited from driving other youths under 25 from six months to one year. The law also restricts the nighttime hours when a teen may be allowed to drive. The new law affects every teenager who obtained a license starting in January of 2005. Those who received their license in 2005 were, or will soon be, sent a letter from the DMV to inform them of the change.

The reason for the new law is not only to prevent crashes while driving other teens, but also to prevent reckless driving late at night while kids are rambunctious or under the influence of alcohol . The new law states that license holders under the age of 18 cannot drive after 11 p.m. or before 5 a.m. for their first year, whereas previously the nighttime driving restrictions began at midnight and ended at 5 a.m. Lafayette Police Chief Mike Fisher explained that the law is used as a tool under the discretion of the police officers. "The certain code is used to keep young men and women from driving with a carload of their friends when they are yelling and screaming, and maybe drinking alcohol and getting into crashes. So I tell my officers that they can use this code if they see a carload of kids and it's 12 o'clock at night and they are driving recklessly." He added, "this is a very good code that they could use to keep [kids] from getting into car crashes."

The new restrictions on nighttime driving will also have an effect on school events. Dances, which usually end at 11 o'clock, will likely have to start and end earlier to allow students to get home without rushing at night. Head of Dance Committee, Julie Zischke explained that "the administration talked to the Lafayette Police Department and decided that it would be best to end the dances a half hour earlier so that most students can be off the roads and at home by 11, therefore the school won't be forcing anyone to break the law."

The new law has angered many students at Acalanes who need to wait an extra six months to drive their friends around. In addition, some students who had already completed their initial six months, and were already driving their friends will have to abide by the new rules and not drive others under 25 until their full year is completed. "I can see why they would change the rules to ensure our safety," says junior Robert Graves, who has had his license for well over 6 months, "but I'm not very happy about it because I felt as though I waited an eternity to get my initial six months and now I have to do it all over again." Junior Greg Weitzman feels that the law is restricting him from helping others. "I think it's ridiculous how I've been able to drive kids and carpool them to practice and places for five months already, and now I'm no longer allowed to."

Juniors will be the first group of teens who will have to abide by this new law. Junior Robert Blumenfeld feels that the new law will only "put more drunk drivers on the road because

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Go to the Benefit Concert Saturday, February 11, all proceeds go to victims of the genocide in Sudan. See page 6.

Don't forget to buy Valentine's Day Grams! They can be for that special someone or that really good friend. Whatever floats your boat! No one wants to be the only one without one. On sale today and Monday at lunch.

License Changes

continued from pg. 3

teenagers get drunk, [which] happens every weekend, and if you can't have someone that would drive [them] home, then you would have more people who would drive drunk." Blumenfeld had his six months completed for a week and a half when the bill was put in place.

Chief Fisher explains that, in the case that Blumenfeld brought up, the designated driver is not responsible for the other drunken teens in the car. "If [a teen] picks up [his/her] friends, and they happen to be under the influence of alcohol, she hasn't violated anything by that, she might even be doing them a favor," Fisher explains, "but on the other hand, we know from experience that if you have a carload of drunk kids, and if you have one kid that's not drunk, the ones in the back are going to be [acting erratic], and that can be very distracting to the driver." Fisher explains that an established punishment has not been put in place yet, so until then, it will be up to the courts to decide the penalty for each case.

"I also think that it was wrong to make it retroactive. I think that [if] teens have already [gotten] passed their six month period, it's unfair to take that right away. You can't give a teen that right and take it away without expecting some kind of backlash."
- Mother, Sarah Blumenfeld

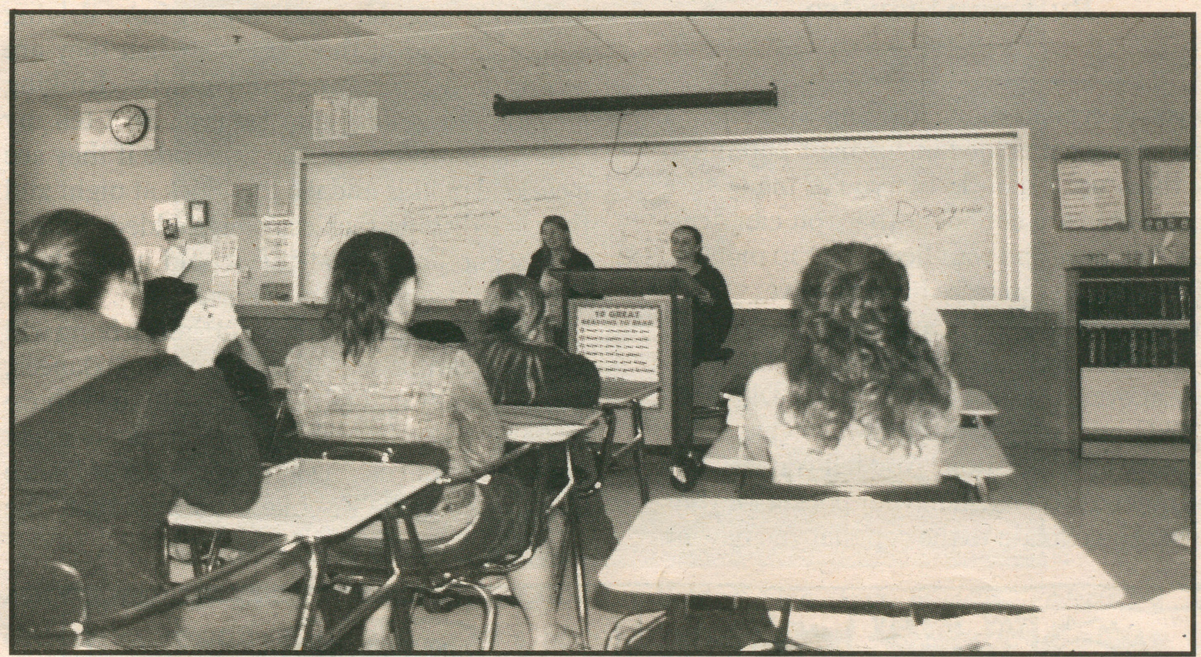
Blumenfeld's mother, Sarah, does not have a problem with the fact that her son has to abide by the new laws; however, she believes that they are a bit strict. "I think the 11 o'clock curfew is a tad early, I think that it could have remained midnight. I don't think that needed to be changed," she said. "I also think that it was wrong to make it retroactive. I think that [if] teens have already [gotten] passed their six month period, it's unfair to take that right away. You can't give a teen that right and take it away without expecting some kind of backlash."

Chief Fisher clearly explains that the police officers of Lafayette will absolutely not be roaming the streets at night or in the morning to try and catch people breaking this law; it is only used to prevent packs of kids, either under the influence or not, from disturbing the peace early in the morning or in late at night.

Through all the ranting and raving about the new law, junior Clark Winslow actually

Homophobia Workshops

GSA spreads awareness about gay and lesbian issues


Blueprint Photo/ Bryan Schnugg

Students listen attentively during the GSA workshops given to freshmen.

By Valerie Lew
Staff Writer

The Gay-Straight Alliance visited every freshman English class to spread awareness of homophobia and tolerance of others' sexuality.

The workshops began in 2000, when GSA advisor Erik Honda "saw lots of homophobia on campus, and a hate crime against my classroom. Someone painted the entire window area of 204 with a black and white 'straight pride' flag in spring of 1999."

Wanting to put an end to the discrimination, Honda started these workshops in which students in the GSA would visit every freshman English class to speak with them about topics like homophobia and discrimination. "The GSA students are trained by trainers from the Gay Lesbian and Straight Education Network, and then the GSA kids schedule the sessions, conduct them, evaluate them, the whole thing," said Honda.

The initial run was met with some uncertainty. "The first year, [teachers] were a little leery, but when they saw how well-trained and energetic the GSA trainers were, they became very supportive," said Honda.

"I think that this year, as well as every other, that [the workshops] are very well done. I've been fortunate to have wonderful presenters," said English teacher Elizabeth Cusick.

While visiting classrooms helped raise awareness, most of the GSA students had their own reasons for being involved in this workshop. "When I was a freshman, my friend was going through some questioning times with her sexuality, so I went to the GSA with her. Once we were in the GSA, we learned that we could do these workshops and it seemed like a really good way to spread acceptance at our school," said junior Sophie Benjamins.

Some GSA students were anxious about the public speaking part. "Freshmen year I was terrified [the freshmen] were going to laugh at me and make fun of me, and just the general anxiety of public speaking is the biggest thing, even though this is my third year," said junior and co-President of the GSA Mara Constine. Senior Derek Emmons' biggest worry was "whether the students [would think] I was gay, so it was a little awkward at first, but it is cool because I like talking to them."

At first, many of the GSA students were greeted with blank stares and a stone silence. "I've never had a class that has been dead silent the whole way through. I once had a class that kept talking over each other," said junior and GSA member Andi Guyette.

According to Emmons, "One class was a little bit more awkward because the students wouldn't speak. It was like an awkward silence."

Although making a speech in front of a crowd can be stressful, holding the attention of the audience and figuring out how to make an impact is probably the most important part. "I felt that their reactions were appropriate, and I think that one class reacted quietly and one class was asking questions. I tried to judge it on comfort level. They all seemed comfortable," said Cusick.

The workshops seemed to have had their intended effects on the students to get their message of "people being more open-minded and becoming more aware," said Emmons.

Last years freshmen students experienced the same type of presentations. Current sophomore Sam Stromberg said, "I remember that video. At the time, I felt really bad and thought homophobia was horrible, and I still do. I act a lot more normal around gay people because I've met a few that are pretty cool." The lasting effects seem to have made somewhat of an impact on students. "It taught me to be a lot more tolerant, and I have been," said one student, wishing to remain anonymous.

Some freshmen felt that the presentations were very informative, but did not significantly change their opinions. "I thought it was pretty important to learn about, but it only impacted me a little bit, and I learned some more information," said freshman Scott McArthur. According to freshman Olivia James, "[the workshops] was really informative, but it didn't really impact me, but I was with it already."

Overall, the workshops "were good and demonstrated how to be tolerant to all types of sexuality," said freshman Michelle Caine.

State Pushes Students Ahead Against Their Will

California Department of Education manipulation of API scores creates illusory drop

By Jay Yarlagadda
Staff Writer

With a recent release of API scores, the Department of Education has labeled all specialized math classes and students not taking a science their freshman year as "far below average," with the standardized grading system knocking Acalanes down on the charts.

The California Department of Education revised its evaluation policy of the Academic Performance Index (API) by giving students taking specialized math classes such as pre-algebra, which are based on middle school math, and freshmen students not taking a science course an automatic "far below basic" score on the school's overall star test (CST) rating.

The API gives the government a way to measure the overall academic performance and growth of schools, according to the Department of Education. Their policy measures a school's base performance on any given year with a numeric index score ranging from 200 to 1000. Then, the next year, the same scoring mechanism is used and the difference in the scores is considered the "API growth".

"Developmentally, not everyone is ready for algebra. Some students struggle more with math and having some students take Algebra A or Pre-Algebra their freshman year is absolutely appropriate, but the state disagrees." - Principal John Nickerson

Nickerson said the Department of Education chose to put a "far below basic" tag on the specialized math classes because they feel, "algebra is the first math course in high school on the state curriculum, and as an incentive to get more districts to push kids so that they're in algebra their freshman year, they're dinging schools that have freshmen in classes lower than algebra."

The decision to give these students an automatic "far below average" score has led to some protest of this policy by Acalanes teachers. Acalanes teacher Randy Takahashi, who teaches some of these classes showed indifferent feelings toward the policy, saying he doesn't really have an opinion of them. He also said he doesn't think these scores are unfair for his students because they have their own goals.

Nickerson said that, "developmentally, not everyone is ready for algebra. Some students struggle more with math and having some students take Algebra A or Pre-Algebra their freshman year is absolutely appropriate, but the state disagrees." He also said that counting students who do not take science as "far below basic" was, "a cheap way of dinging schools." According to the Department of Education, this policy is in place to give schools a target API, which is 800, and allow them to be accountable for their growth. If a school meets the target API and shows growth, it is eligible to receive monetary awards, such as state funding, and other awards.

Regarding the policy, Takahashi said, "I'm not exactly sure of the rationale behind why they count those scores, but I'm sure there is a reason why they do that." He conceded that, "they call the shots" and he just teaches the classes.

All students in California are required to take standardized tests like the STAR test and exit exams, which determine the rank and score of the school. Although a student's individual performance is not affected, the school's API is, according to Principal John Nickerson.

In 2004, six different elements were used to score a school's API. A school's overall achievement in the math, English, science and history-social science parts of the STAR test as well as the English and math parts of the California exit exam were used. For the exit exam a simple pass/fail mechanism is used. For the STAR test, if a school has specialized math classes, they will be automatically given a "far below basic" score of 200, the lowest possible score.

Although the math and science parts of the STAR test make up just a quarter of the scoring, they could greatly affect a school's ranking, which is used by many colleges in considering a student's grade point average (GPA).

Even if the students in these specialized math classes score well, they will still receive the "far below average" score for the school.

According to Takahashi, his main goal is to get students to a higher level of math and to prepare them for the exit exams, claiming he really doesn't have an opinion of API scores.

The implementation of this policy could make it so students become discouraged and do not prepare for the STAR test because they realize, no matter how well they do, that they will not receive a good score for the school. However, students in the specialized math classes did not seem to be aware of this policy.

"I wasn't aware of it," said Robert Graves, a junior who took a specialized math course in his freshman year. Graves continued saying, "It's just really shocking that they didn't tell us about it."

Takahashi said he does not think his students even know they're scores are being counted against the school and continued saying, "I don't know if they'd even be concerned about it. I don't think it's a big incentive for them to do better."

According to Nickerson, many teachers may not even be aware of the new standards of the API.

"They tend not to pay that much attention to exactly how the API scores are calculated," said Nickerson.

Yet the concept of the API does not seem to be a new thing. The API was established as a result of California's Public Schools Accountability Act (PSAA), legislation that was passed in 1999.

Nickerson said the API has come to he forefront in the last few years because of the "No Child Left Behind" Act passed in 2002, forcing schools to be more accountable for all their students.

These "far below average" scores have a largely negative effect on the school as a whole. They lower the average score of the school, and also lower the rank of the school, which inevitably lessens the amount of money the school gets each year, and thus the school's ability to provide materials and extracurricular activities.

Also, according to Nickerson, "colleges look at the API and use that as part of the way they make judgements about school."

Acalanes has done considerably well on the API in the past. Nickerson said, "The math scores at Acalanes tend to be very high." Part of the reason, according to Nickerson, may be because "students are not pushed as hard to take algebra and advance in the Lafayette schools as much as the Orinda schools."

However, in the past year, Acalanes scored an 840 out of 1000 in the performance index. While still a very good score because it easily passes the recommended 800 score, it remains behind Miramonte and Campolindo, who scored 866 and 882, respectively. This could have resulted from the fact that, according to Nickerson, "the API measurement has become more and more based on our curriculum rather than national norm tests of the general curriculum."

The eventual goal of the Department of Education, according to Nickerson, is to remove these specialized classes, but Takahashi does not see this happening.

"You have to address those students. I have a lot of special education students and those students have to be provided an education," said Takahashi who continued saying that removing the classes might cause a lot of problems.

Takahashi is aware of this push to get students to a higher level of math quicker, but he isn't sure if all students are ready for this change.

Nickerson agreed saying, "Certainly our goal is to get to a place where more students are able to take the appropriate course for freshman year but its working with where students are and putting them in the appropriate place. I don't think we're going to get rid of [pre-algebra] any time soon."

Music to the Ears of Darfur

Interact Club to hold benefit concert for genocide victims

By Hannah O'Brien
Staff Writer

400,000 people dead. 3.5 million people starving. 2.5 million displaced due to the catastrophic violence in Darfur, according to reports by the World Food Program, the United Nations and the Coalition for International Justice. The Sudanese region of Darfur has a population of only six million people. The severity of the open warfare that erupted in early 2003 due to civil war and ethnic cleansing only continues to escalate today as violence, rape, and displacement heighten in the country.

The Interact Club, the high school affiliate of Rotary International, has begun serious local efforts to help stop the genocide. The Interact Club is hosting a benefit concert on Saturday, February 11, at 6pm, to raise awareness of the genocide and financial aid for the victims.

Proceeds from the benefit concert will go to helping children in Darfur during the current genocide in Sudan.

Courtesy Photo /savedarfur.org

"It's a great issue of our time and it hasn't gotten enough media attention. We are trying to do what we can in our community to help," said Interact Club co-President, senior Sarah Ting. Interact has dedicated its efforts for most of the year towards planning the event. The club has focused on promoting the concert, discussed ways to create awareness, and raised money through various fundraisers.

"We have shifted our focus from the Wheelchair Foundation to the genocide, a more pressing issue and a very worthy cause," said club member Rose Palley. Interact plans to continue aiding Darfur throughout the year.

The conflict in Darfur is a combination of multiple entangled issues. The main issue at hand is the removal of civilians considered to be disloyal to the government by "Janjaweed" militias. Although the crisis in Darfur is of the first degree, there has been a great deal of talk but relatively little action by the global community to aid the situation. Private organizations such as the Save Darfur Coalition, an alliance of more than 100 human rights, humanitarian, and faith-based organizations, have initiated large-scale, urgent responses to aid Darfur. The refugees are currently subject to rape and deadly diseases and lack shelter and food.

Only recently has the UN started to make a critical push to take serious action. According to BBC reports, there is a draft resolution circulating in New York at the United Nations Security Council, calling for the UN to take leadership of the peacekeeping force in Darfur from the African Union.

Senior Dana Sherne, founder and President of the Acalanes PASS Club (Promoting Awareness of the Situation in Sudan), understood the severity of the appalling tragedies occurring in Darfur and decided to take local action by founding the club in 2005. Sherne described her mission statement for the club. "We work to help others become more aware of the situation in Sudan." Sherne, also an active member of the Interact Club, has worked closely with Interact to plan the concert.

The bands scheduled to perform at the concert are Los Angeles-based AM Radio and local band, Kid Innocence. Lining up bands and getting them to the event was not an easy task. Interact Treasurer, senior Taylor Lee, coordinated the bands. Lee originally contacted Ringside, a well-known band that has been featured on TV shows such as The OC, and Ryan Huston, a performer from Santa Clara. Huston agreed to donate his time and was one of the scheduled performers. "Ryan unfortunately canceled a few weeks before the concert was due to happen, " said Interact co-President Kristin Studeman.

Fortunately, Kid Innocence, an indie/rock band, agreed to perform. Band members include senior Greg Francis, Acalanes graduate Rob Marshall, Justin Kader, Will Kreiser, and Phil Devencenzi. " It seems like a good opportunity to help people in need and we love to help," said guitarist Greg Francis. Kid Innocence fan senior Nick Carrel said, " I'm excited to see them play and I'm excited to see them show their new stuff to Acalanes. I know that they like to help out as many benefit concerts as they can. I know that Interact has put a lot of effort into the concert and I hope that a lot of people show up and it's an overall success."

The concert is an opportunity to enjoy music and, at the same time, increase local efforts towards ending the famine and death.

Studeman, with a hopeful glint in her eye, thought about the work that needs to be done and the difference that even Acalanes High School students can make, simply by enjoying a Saturday night. She said, anticipating what was to come, ready to create change, "Our generation has a chance to help stop a genocide. If we don't act now, who will?"

Editor-in- Chief Kristin Studeman contributed to this article.

Other ways to help:

-Visit www.savedarfur.org
-Visit http://teens4peace.net/
-Join the Interact Club, Wednesdays at lunch in room 414
-Join the PASS Club, Thursdays at lunch in room 426

Benefit Concert for Victims of Genocide in Darfur

When: Saturday February 11th at 6 p.m.
Where: Big Gym at Acalanes
Admission: $7
Tickets sold in the front quad during lunch, or at the door.
Featuring: Kid Innocence and AM Radio
All proceeds go to help genocide victims in Darfur
Contact: Taylor Lee keepweezin33@yahoo.com

Quiz Bowl

By Emma Chastain
Staff Writer

The Quiz Bowl Team, comprised of senior Andrew Elefant, sophomore Bronwen O'Herin, and freshman Gurbir Dhillon, beat the Evergreen Valley Team on January 21 advancing to the third round of the Quiz Kids competition.

The Quiz Kids competition is sponsored by KRON-TV, and appears on the KRON channel Sundays at 12:00. The round against Evergreen Valley will appear on television on March 18 at 12:00. The competition has six single elimination rounds, and the winning team in the sixth round becomes the champion.

The competition has two rounds. The first round gives one team an allotted amount of time to answer a question given to them. The second round pitches the two competing teams against each other, requiring each team to buzz in as quickly as possible before the other team does to answer a question. Questions range from geometry and other high school math to sports to literature.

The Acalanes team is looking very strong this year. Team member Bronwen O'Herin said, "I think this is a good team. Gurbir is a really nice new, freshman addition." Joe Schottland, who is now in his second year of advising and coaching the team, also believes the team is in good shape. "[The team is] not only really solid, but it's nicely spread out. We have a good freshman, good sophomore, and very solid seniors, so it's a nice wide range of years," said Schottland.

The Quiz Bowl Team prepares by practicing twice a week at lunch. During these practice sessions, the team attempts to answer different questions similar to ones they might encounter during the competition.

The Quiz Kids competition is one of many different competitions that the team competes in. Acalanes beat Campolindo in the first round of the competition.

The Quiz Bowl Team will next be competing on February 11. Their opponents will most likely be Palo Alto High School.

Frisbee Team's New Season

Blueprint Photo/ Ali Cellini

Seniors Paijmann Premji and Jamie Zandstra practice after school with the ultimate Frisbee team. The team is coached by Mrs. Tams.

By Oscar Cuming-Timms
Staff Writer

The formation of a newer, more organized ultimate frisbee team for the 2006 season leaves some wondering why it is not a school-sanctioned team. But for now, at least over the next few years, ultimate frisbee will most likely not receive any school backing.

One of the team captains, Robin Croen, explains that ultimate isn't currently sanctioned by the school "because it's new. Ultimate is a growing sport in the youth leagues. I suspect that in ten years or so it will be as popular as soccer." He says he would love to see ultimate become a school-sanctioned sport and that a lot of the planning behind the current team was done through the school even though the team does not count as an Acalanes team.

If ultimate were to become a school-sanctioned sport, the team would no longer have to practice off campus, being allowed use of the new field and would have the support of the school athletic department.

Jo Tams, coach and facilitator to the team, admits that becoming a school-sanctioned team would mean that "we would have to run tryouts and make cuts. Things that would destroy a lot of the character of the team." She also thinks that the character of the team would be changed by the fact that practices would probably have to be every day, a commitment that could prevent some of the long standing members of the team from participating.

"There are some schools across the country that have made it a varsity sport," said Coach Tams, "but probably less than twenty." For the Acalanes School District to do so would most likely, in her opinion, not only strain the budget, but make the district a pioneer district, which always makes the decision harder.

Jazz Band has a Note-able Performance

By Justin McAdams
Staff Writer

The Jazz Band placed first in their division for the second straight year at the 17th annual Folsom Jazz Festival in Folsom, California. The festival, held Saturday, January 28, had 107 elementary, middle, and high school jazz bands competing in five divisions. These divisions included jazz combos, jazz choirs, elementary school bands, middle school bands, and high school bands. The bands were graded on a score of 0 to 100 by a panel of three judges. The three scores were then added up for a final score.

"The thing that makes the Folsom [Jazz Festival] kind of unique and especially good is there are bands from all over Northern California. It's neat to go because they have clinics for the kids all day long, [and] you get to hear all the hot bands from Northern California" said Jazz Band Director Rick Meyer.

The jazz band competed in the High School Jazz Bands division against 57 other schools. Due to the large number of high schools, the high schools were further divided into A through AAAA subdivisions based on the size of the school. Acalanes placed first in the "Jazz Bands AAA" subdivision with scores of 93, 92, and 95 for a combined score of 280 and came in 5th in the overall competition, with Berkeley High School placing first. In placing 5th overall, Acalanes missed the final playoff by one spot.

"After we played we were relieved, and excited to see how we had done. It had been a long day and most of us were waiting to see if our work paid off," said junior Greg Weitzman, who plays piano for the jazz band. After the results were in, "We were slightly disappointed, but the bands in the top 4 are really top notch bands, and it was really about who your judge was once it gets that close. Music is so subjective it's hard to judge."

The Acalanes Jazz Band will be playing again at the Lafayette Jazz Festivl on March 11 at the Veteran's Memorial Building.

DO YOU WANT…

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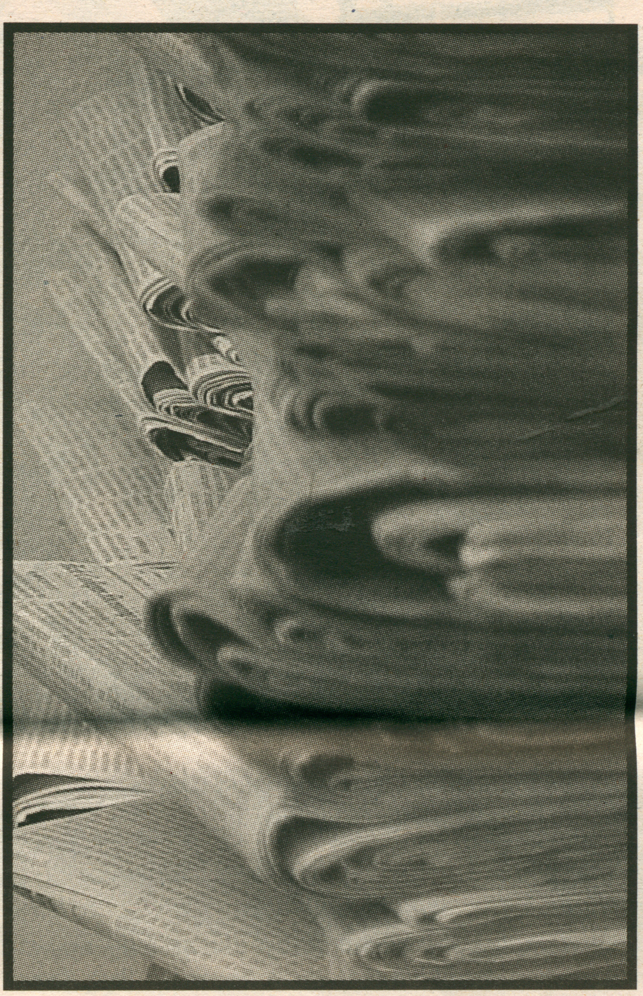

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Back In the Day

Stories from some of the first Dons speak to new generations

By Emma Chastain
Staff Writer

Imagine waking up early in the morning, putting on your brand new Spalding Buck shoes and heading out the door to go to school. It's pouring out, and the rain is pooling on the unpaved street. Still, trudging the mile to Acalanes High School is the only option. The streets are more quiet in the early morning without speeding BMWs and five-car households.

There are not many cars on the road because most families cannot afford multiple cars, so most students either walk or ride the bus. If you live a mile or less away, to get to your first period class, possibly a homemaking class for girls or auto shop for boys, the only option is to put one foot ahead of the other and shuffle along. A few students are lucky enough, or desperate enough, to drive any type of automobile that rumbles along. "Hot rods were very popular. Cut down Model A Fords with V-8 engines were common. I remember one student had an old hearse. Not too many kids wanted to ride with him," said 1950 graduate Bob Warren, in an email interview.

One female student, dressed in a matching sweater-skirt set with saddle shoes, walks down the 100 wing and turns the corner towards the main hall to the 400 wing, which was just built in 1950. The open layout of multiple wings was a new concept in high school design. Warren said, "Acalanes was one of the first schools in the nation to be built in a single story classroom wing type of configuration. Up until this time, schools were multi-story type buildings like city schools."

As she walks down the long hall on the hard cement, she smells the delicate fragrance of flowers. Acalanes was a showcase school and was kept exquisitely groomed. "There were roses all over this school, lining the hallways," said Sherril Barber, who graduated from Acalanes in 1957.

Walking into the brand new 400 wing, the student heads to her homemaking class, which was described as the study of "household needs such as shelter, food, budgeting, clothing, family relationships, and health," according to the student handbook of 1954 – 1955. Here students cook and clean and learn exactly what it takes to run your future household. Sherril Barber said, "The entire four years, I was here there was one boy who was allowed into the [Homemaking] class."

The boys in the cooking class wore prim white aprons, with a tasteful amount of lace bordering, over their pants and collared shirts and learn how to live the life of a bachelor. They will not be bachelors for long though, the art of chopping vegetables and cooking meat is a feat that identifies them "Ideal husbands" in the yearbook.

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1950's
Dancing a Christmas fairy tale
CHRISTMAS 1957
THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL
PRIZE FASHION
1950 COUNTRY FAIR

Blueprint Photo/ Ryan McCowan

A display in the main office by Tom Eggertson shows the progression of Acalanes through the last six decades. The first class of graduates from Acalanes graduated in 1941.

ACALANES BLUEPRINT feature

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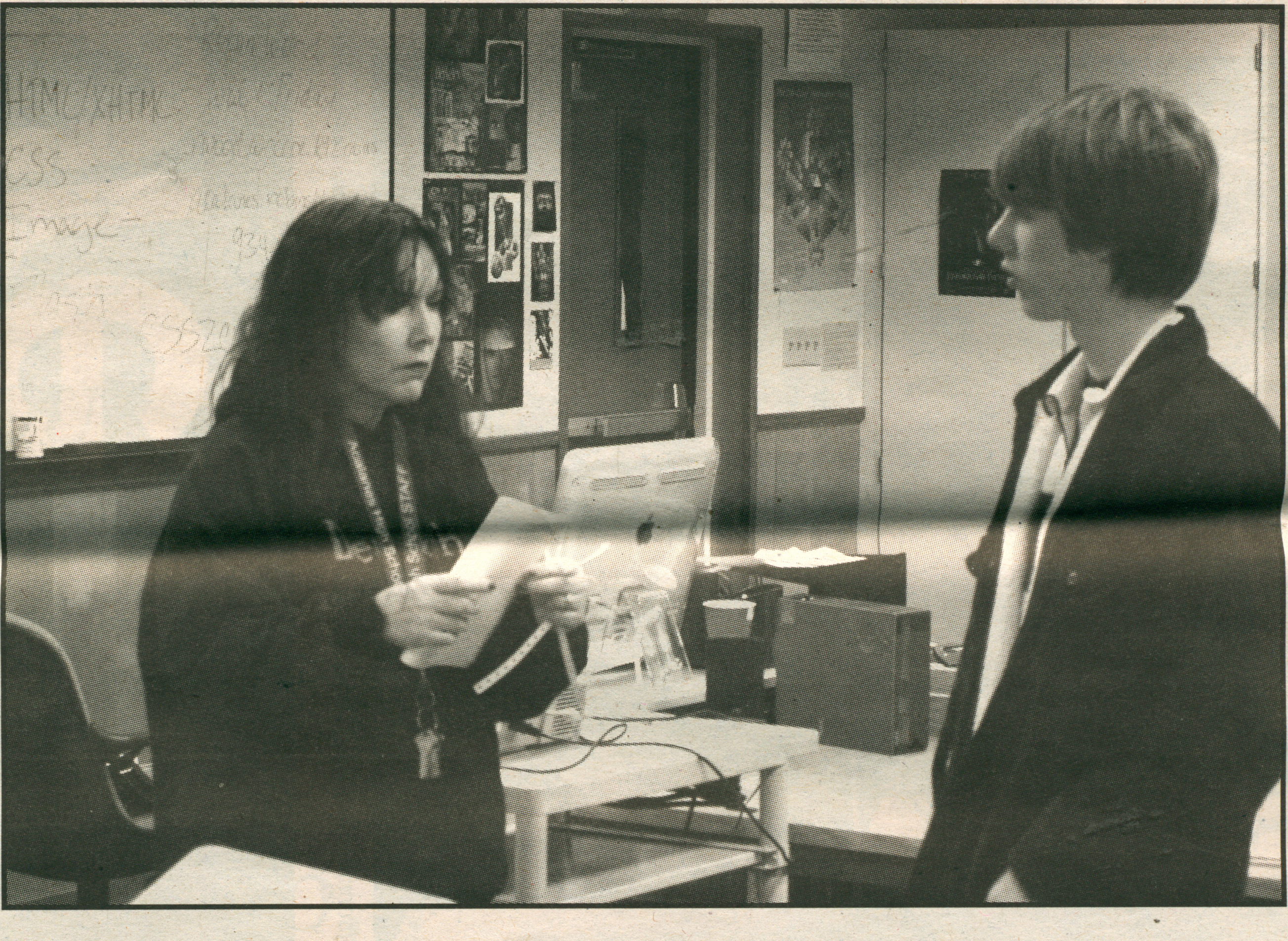
Do you have ideas for or would like to be featured in Ask Acalanes? Submit your name and ideas to room 209.

The Reels of Acalanes Staff Keep Turning

A snapshot of new video production teacher Bonnie O'Neill

By Taylor Stern
Staff Writer

In typical Lafayette fashion, people spend their entire pre-college life with the exact same people. The adventure begins in kindergarten, even preschool, and continues all the way through middle school, and then to Acalanes. For anyone new to the area and lacking immediate connections to the social network, it can be a tough transition. Let's face it, high school cliques are not the most inviting social institutions. Basically, life for those high school students new to Lafayette can be extremely difficult at first.



Blueprint Photo/ Ryan McCowan

If acceptance of new students at Acalanes is difficult and prolonged, imagine what it is like for a new teacher, especially if she begins mid-year, after all of the hustle and bustle of beginning a new school year has died down, and all attention can be focused on her.

The latest addition to the Acalanes staff, video production teacher Bonnie O'Neill, has made a valiant effort to make a positive impact on her new students since her arrival in November. O'Neil said the students' acceptance of her was "the typical new teacher, mid-semester challenge." O'Neill met this challenge with unrelenting optimism and found acceptance and encouragement. "[My students] are just a great group of kids, and they have been very flexible. They are finally appreciative that I can bring something to the class that hasn't been offered to them before," said O'Neill.

Senior Libby Lefanowicz, one of O'Neill's video production students said of O'Neill, "I love her, I think she's awesome. She is really smart. She really knows a lot about the movie business because she is a screenplay writer."

O'Neill took over for Mr. Tams, who left abruptly after a little more than two months as the digital design and video production teacher. Acalanes Principal John Nickerson was not permitted to say whether Tams was fired or he quit because it was a personal matter, but did note that, "I was very disappointed when he left in the middle of the semester."

Lefanowicz gave some possible explanations for Tams' sudden departure. She said, "He was overwhelmed because he had so much to deal with. He had to take teaching credential classes, he was doing ultimate frisbee, he was still doing his business, and he was teaching, and I don't think that he'd ever dealt with this many kids before. Lafayette kids have a way of getting on teachers' nerves."

O'Neill, who has a Bachelor's Degree in broadcast communications and a Master's in film, is a very accomplished screenwriter. She decided to begin teaching after she took a class taught by Lester Cole at Berkeley. He was one of the Hollywood Ten, who were blacklisted during the Cold War. The Hollywood Ten is a group of people who claimed that the 1st Amendment of the Constitution states that when put on trial for having left wing views in 1947, they didn't have to respond to any questions. She said, "Lester Cole encouraged me to pursue my writing career." However, he thought I should have gone into novel writing rather than screen writing because the whole Hollywood scene can "be intimidating and really unfair."

Her impressive film background is noticed by her students. Senior Dillon Magrann-Wells said, "She knows a lot about the film industry and is really experienced in it. She is really knowledgeable about film and film history."

Some of her accomplishments include lecturing in England and writing a chapter in Edinburgh University's Creative Writing Handbook on screenwriting. She has also taught online at Nottingham Trent. O'Neill currently teaches film and screen writing at Diablo Valley College and at the Art Institute of San Francisco in addition to her work at Acalanes.

After Tams left, Nickerson asked O'Neill, a friend and parent of two current students, if she knew anyone who would be interested in the job. Eventually she decided to apply for the job herself. O'Neill originally planned on teaching at Acalanes for a short time. She has many other prior commitments, and she explained that being freelance (self-employed) makes it difficult to commit to something for five days a week. However, her plans have now changed, and she is hoping to remain at Acalanes for awhile. Part of the reason that she wants to stay is because high school students "have incredible energy and the have a lot of fun and spontaneous ideas."

The one disappointing thing about teaching here at Acalanes for O'Neill is that she is not in high school herself. O'Neill loved high school and had tons of friends who she still remains close to. However, if O'Neill could go back to high school, she would "study more and not horse around as much."

O'Neill has high expectations for her students, and is doing everything in her power to help those who have hopes of a film related future. She said, "I am really trying to support people that have talent in this area, and convince them to pursue this as a career. I think the ideal career is to combine your passion with something that can support you and help you thrive."

Some “Secrets” Should Not Be Shared

Assembly educates freshmen and sophomores about the dangers of sexual activity and STDs

Blueprint Photo/Ali Cellini

The cast of “Secrets” performs for the freshman and sophomore audience. This year’s juniors and seniors have not seen the performance.

By Emma Chastain
Staff Writer

Eddie, one of the most popular seniors in high school, is looking forward to his scholarship to college next year and has a steady girlfriend who he enjoys spending time with. Eddie has a secret, however. He has contracted the Human Immunodeficiency Virus, commonly called HIV, and can be expected to contract AIDS, or Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, that will eventually end his life. The fatality rate of AIDS is an unthinkable reality that most do not want to consider on a regular basis.

Fortunately, Eddie is just a fictional character in the live theater program, “Secrets”, created by Kaiser Permanente as part of its Educational Theatres Program. Acalanes freshman and sophomores watched the performance during an assembly on January 25. This show followed by a question and answer session. Students saw Eddie build up the courage to go to a clinic to get tested and how he dealt with the news that he contracted HIV. They also saw his friends, Monica, Ty, Denise, and Kelly, deal with pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, and important decisions.

The show is filled with music, movement, and humor in hopes of keeping high school students engaged while they learn about the possible consequences of sexual behavior and how to make the right decision for themselves. Heather Gordon, who played Monica in the program, said, “We’re not telling [the audience members] that they should do one thing over another. We’re just trying to inform people and give them the best information so when they make a decision for themselves [...] they can make a healthy decision and be informed.”

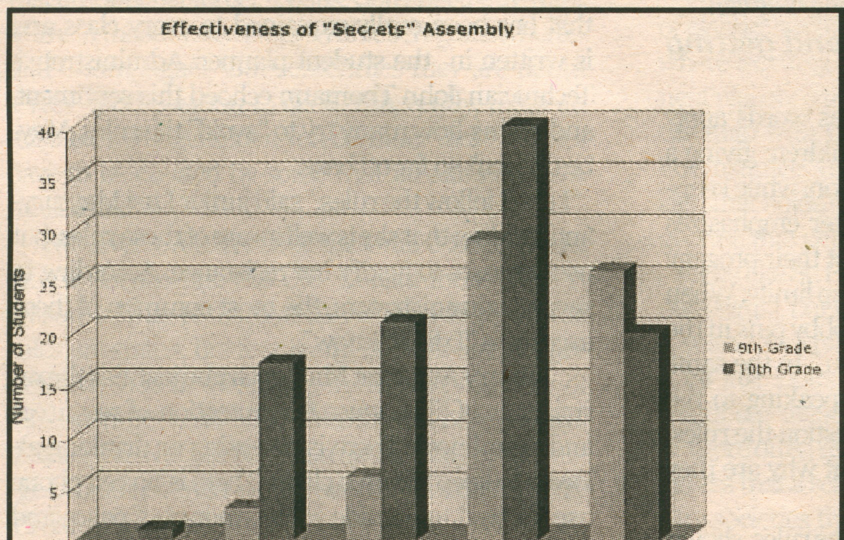
38,490 young people in the United States received a diagnosis of AIDS in 2003 according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention findings. It is Kaiser Permanente’s hope that “Secrets” can help young people to make better decisions about abstinence and engaging in risky behavior. Acalanes Nurse Dvora Citron, who saw the performance, liked how it portrayed the good and bad parts of real relationships. “If you watch any show on TV with anything sexually related, how many times do they talk about STD’s and contraception unless its some movie of the week about someone dying of AIDS?” remarked Citron.

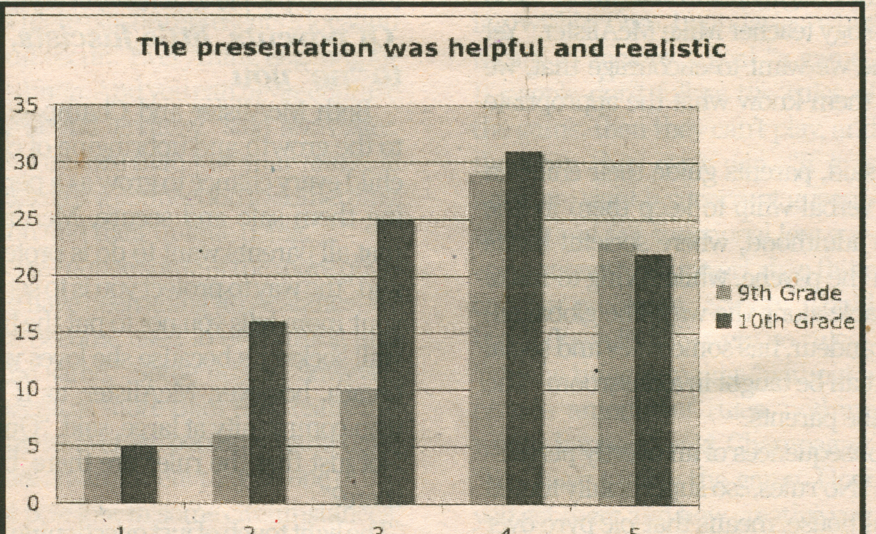
The message that students got from “Secrets” was varied. Sophomore Bronwen O’Herin realized that, “You may not really know what’s going on with a person so much by just looking at them.” Freshman Scott Davenport had a different view on the performance. He said, “The assembly made me realize how big of a deal AIDS is. I think that the assembly opened people’s eyes up to all these STDs.”

Dean Starnes, the project coordinator of Kaiser Permanente Educational Theatre Programs, said in an email interview, “We want students to take away the message that actions have consequences, there are effective ways to say ‘no’ to peer pressure, and the only 100 percent effective way of preventing STDs and pregnancy is abstinence from all sex and needle sharing.”

In a survey conducted by Blueprint, it was found that the assembly had some impact on freshman and sophomores and made them more concerned with STD’s. Freshman males were the least concerned about STDS’sbefore attending the assembly and sophomore females were most aware of and worried about the dangers of STD’s. The performance had the biggest impact on sophomore males, who felt they were more conscious of STDs. Overall, females of both grades felt more strongly that the assembly was on a useful and pertinent subject than males.

“Secrets” is different than the average health class lecturing students on the dangers of sexually transmitted diseases. The live program draws students into the story, and into the issue. Samuel Traylor, who played Ty, commented, “[Live theater is] a lot more effective than just a lecture or handing out information, and I think it’s even more effective than the Internet.” Gordon agreed and added that in using humor and music they are trying to make the issue approachable for students and not intimidating. “[We’re not] telling [the audience members] to memorize terms, and it’s not an adult lecturing them about how they should behave,” said Gordon. Students agreed that a play, or similar performance, was much more helpful than sitting through a health class with a lecturer. “I thought [the performance] was entertaining. It was better than a lot of the other sex-ed things that we’ve heard about, but ... most of the basic stuff I already learned,” said Sophomore Grace Appert.





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The "NO" Nation

The stricture of rules in a world of self-indulgent, over-the-top behavior knows "no" bounds

By Alexx Perloff
Staff Writer

Rules, as every US government teacher will tell you with overflowing joy and every student on campus will tell you with great dismay, are the basis of our society. They define each and every one of us. Parents, teachers, counselors, peers, and employers create these metaphysical and physical bounds.

There is, in fact, one word that defines society in the simplest of ways. It is one of the first words that human beings learn at the age of two. It is an extremely powerful word. It is the word we have all come to know and love and loath at other times, depending on whether we get to use it or somebody else is using it and how... "no."

With many people adhering to the "glass half full" argument, some may say that humans are defined by their liberties. So why is it that the seeming majority of complaints come from a person wanting more rights and freedoms? Is it that humans, or maybe just Americans, are anesthetized to the everyday liberties we are granted, continuously craving more and more self-determination?

Children, babies, and even adults may be unaware of the number of times they are told "no," but the word lingers ready to lash out from the mouths of the controllers...parents. The word "no" has been conditioned into our existence. If this is so, then the unending enemy of this condition is curiosity. Curiosity is cherished in many societies, and in fact encouraged, especially in this one. But even a valued trait like curiosity can lead to people overstepping social boundaries and breaking rules to find the answers they seek.

"No" and limits beyond 55 mph

"We condition our children...we teach our children...we want to raise them, for instance, to be curious, active and engaged in their world," said Acalanes psychology teacher Mike McAlister. "Yet at the same time we want to encourage that, we also want to let them know what the appropriate limits are."

As McAlister said, parents guide their children using "no" as a verbal whip to keep them in line down a path to adulthood, where societal limits are ingrained in the psyche, while trying to make their lives enjoyable along the way. The global society, in all its grandeur, has some rules and social boundaries that can be taught in a classroom. The rest is left up to the parents.

Imagine the consequences of an overtly permissive upbringing. "No rules," so superficially touted by Outback Steakhouse, means that 'ole pyro over there can play with matches all he wants. In that case, the human race would wipe itself out before leaving diapers.

Without rules, signs, and "no," there would be the anarchy of post-French Revolution France throughout our social structures and within the consciousness of each person. There would be "a reign of terror," said McAlister, just like what happened in Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina. Mostly common sense and partly research says that there must be some rules to any society. "No" and its constituent limitations must not be allowed to guide any society to maturity. But if you impose too many rules, as McAlister says, there will be "a little fascist running around inside of you."

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NO DOGS ALLOWED
NO PARKING ANY TIME
NO RETURN PRIVILEGES

Blueprint Photo Illustration/ Alexx Perloff

You know, the kind of teacher back in third grade who makes you say, "May I go get a drink of water," not, "Can I get a drink of water" Or that always lovely stickler teacher who likes to shout, "Don't run in the halls!" and "hold your scissors face down!"

"Sociologists call it the problem of order," said Dr. Duane Champagne of the UCLA Sociology Department. "If everyone did what they wanted to do, nothing could happen. So the rules are set up to try to enable people to achieve everything they can."

Of parents, little fascists, and getting to "no" you

Both McAlister and Champagne's words apply to the growth and upbringing of children; giving a child every chance to grow as a person, while keeping them safe and secure. McAlister emphasizes that all parents want to do is protect their progeny and "the way to protect you is to set up limits. When your mom tells you not to put the bobby pins in the wall socket it's because she loves you." In the same breath, however, McAlister, as if speaking to the teen community at large, said, "Question the rules. Not just that the rules are there, but why are they there?"

The light touch of just questioning the rules, shown by most loving parents to their wild and tantrum throwing toddlers, cannot be used on your average Joe Shmo stepping on the White House lawn. For the societal misfits who just couldn't stay on the path, the hard-hitting substitute, like the U.S. government, has to come in and take on the role of mom and dad.

"Similarly governments, or organized governmental institutions, like a school [...] will take on that [parental role], where if it isn't expressly negated through signage, or you know, some type of rules or code or policy, then it's allowed," said McAlister.

Case in point, look around you on campus. You're going to see an avalanche of signs that tell you "no return privileges," "no cell phones," "no cleats," "no dogs," etc. There are all these signs around campus that government must impose, because if they didn't tell you that you couldn't wear cleats into the locker room, if they didn't tell you that you could not bring food into the gym, you'd go ahead and do it anyway.

However, this is just the tip of the iceberg. Take a look at the student handbook. It's riddles with rules like "no tardies" and "no leaving campus."

Land of the free, home of the brave, please.

Unlike the overkill "NO"tices all over campus, Americans have "please" associated with many command signs, such as "Please stay on the path." Even adding a "please" and forming a request as opposed to a mandate, the message remains the same: "no". Does the perception of politeness enhance compliance?

When limits are explicitly stated, students still struggle to understand and obey one of the simplest two letter words in the English language. Campus Supervisor Andy McDonald has to remind students to not do something at least once a day. Attendance Secretary Janet Klemmedson expressed her great frustration with the many students who defy -- whether intentionally or not -- an attendance policy that has been orally explained to every class and is written in the student planner. Administrative Technician John Thomann echoed this sentiment, and noting how many try to "avoid" the rules. Maybe this isn't so far off base.

"I don't follow the rules," said junior Lusi Maysuryants, adding that she is well aware of these rules, but uses excuses to justify her resistance. According to several administrators, the most common of these excuses is "I didn't know".

Library Assistant Marlyn Grube justifies the restrictions of library use for protection of resources and cleanliness. There is no eating or drinking allowed to keep the area clean. There is no cell phone use allowed to provide some amount of peace and quiet. Grube said, "[No] is something most people identify with. It is not up for discussion. It's just

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“No” Nation

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plain and clear ‘no’ and everyone understands it.” She believes explicitly stating these rules helps maintain order, cleanliness and respect and conveys these expectations on a level that everyone can understand.

Why should I obey a rule if it's “stupid”

Sophomore Dan Gilmore's perspective reflects the belief of many students around campus. “If I'm on a cell phone it's not hurting anybody. So, why not?” said Gilmore, adding that he does choose his moments to question authority carefully. This idea exposes the underbelly of vigilante discretion exercised by many around campus who frequently defy the rules.

But is this to say that the word “no” is having no effect? Is the power of “no” enough? This intrusive concept of opposing limits may uniformly establish expectations, as Grube suggested.

“The way to protect you is to set up limits. When your mom tells you not to put the bobby pins in the wall socket, it's because she loves you.”

The United States of America is supposedly “the land of the free” in all its glory, having the minimal amount of rules to run smoothly. So therefore it would be out of place for anyone to suggest that the government is restrictive when it tells its citizens “no, there will be no use of a motor vehicle without our expressed consent.” But don't we hear people complaining all the time about how hard it is to attain and renew a driver's license? So maybe the slogan should go, “we are the land of the free, until we decide you are dangerous to yourself and others.”

In a society like the United States, according to Champagne, “people are assumed to be open ended and creative. And the idea is to only give limited restrictions to make sure the game is played properly.” However, in places like the fallen Soviet Union, the government created rules to direct society on the minutest level. “The leadership would give [society] direction as to where it was going.” Champagne called these absolutist regimes where “everything is governed from the top.”

The only way for a government, like the Soviet Union for example, to stay in power is for it to have vast amounts of force. “People don't normally want to live in those systems and will rebel against them,” said Champagne. “But sometimes they are not in a very good position to do it. Inherently, that's an unstable arrangement if you consider that the rules have to be created by some mutual agreement or consensus.”

However, even in one of the United States' most sacred documents, the U.S. Constitution, there is reason to this restrictive mentality where all the rules are stated, but few, if any, of the freedoms are explicitly stated. McAlister, in his best mimicry of the constitution said, “The ninth Amendment says that ‘Rights will not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.’ In other words, it's okay for me to get on a boat and sail to Hawaii if I feel like it. We have taken the shortcut, which is to say, ‘We'll let you know if it is illegal.’”

It is easier for the parenting body to say what is not permitted and anything that is not forbidden is allowed. “There is almost an anything goes mentality [to it],” said McAlister. Be creative, we are a cooperative society, but please, stay within the predetermined limits and laws.

The signs of regulation, literally, are all around the quaint little society of Acalanes. The teens that walk the halls of Acalanes pass by the “faculty only” sign in front of the 200 wing, the “keep quiet” signs in the library, and the “keep out” signs every time construction crews come to eat away space at the campus. “I don't really think too much about the signs,” said senior Drew St. Pierre. “I mean, they are there for a reason. So, it leads me to believe that at one time or another there were certain problems that had to be addressed by putting up those signs.”

Some types of rules, policies, or statements of direction, other than signs, may not need to be written or said. It is common for societies, like Acalanes, to make unwritten rules; like the rule that only seniors can sit on the senior deck. It is just something that developed over time.

“Well, it depends on the particular signs, but lots of the signs that are used are to protect something so that people won't damage something,” said Champagne. He used the example of the Alamo in San Antonio, Texas. The Alamo itself is a sign of freedom, symbolizing more than just a building, but it also plays host to numerous signs that restrict the sometimes enthusiastic tourists. It is not that the rules are a restriction on human rights, just that without them, there would be no monument.

Champagne is quick to point out that, most of the time, signs and rules are not created until there is a need for them. “Sometimes an excess of signage is because of people breaking the rules.”

According to McAlister, one might view signs of all types through the lens of semiotics, the study of signs and symbols and what they relate to or signify. What a sign represents is policy, but it is much more. When a student enters their third period class and sees the sign “401,” the sign is just a piece of plastic; but that mere plastic represents a location where learning will occur. “Everything is a component piece of a roadmap. And you can never confuse the map with the actual territory,” said McAlister. For instance, you are more than just your name. A sign that holds a name is a connection to something greater, that person and their unique being.

Teens like St. Pierre “notice some of the more obvious [signs], but we have been going [to Acalanes] for 4 years. So I have become used to everything and it all just looks the same.” Some others, however, might see these signs as more than they really are or more often than the average person. Champagne agrees that a school environment may be one of the rare societies that possibly, in some circumstances, breeds dissent.

“It is the nature of the teen to recognize where the boundary is and to push that boundary. In fact, I would say that in society, that is the job that we give to teens [...] that keeps the rest of us, who are not teens, on our toes,” said McAlister, stressing that a healthy balance between questioning and accepting must be maintained. That balance finds its way into teens such as senior Jack Leitch whose said “as long as they are not ridiculous,” challenging unnecessary signs is uncalled for.

It's not just teens that see the regulatory signs. Adults see them too. “I think that there are some adults who really struggle with boundaries and rules as well,” said McAlister saying that this sixth sense to see restrictions is a carryover from a not so far-gone childhood. “It's not that [adults] ignore the boundaries, it's that often times what we can easily define as maturity, as being able to recognize boundaries and alter our relationship with them. Instead of railing or fighting against them, we learn to work with them in ways that can constructively engage in changing the world,” he said.

Adults, as they get older, perceive that they have much more to lose. Whether this way of thinking is a product of age or wisdom varies from person to person. Therefore, if someone has more to lose, that person also has more to protect.

So are all policy signs signifying a limitation? In fact, McAlister puts forth that rather than imposing limitations, signs support a structure such as the preservation of a valued object or a structure such as a government. That said, he insists that structures must be questioned. Combining the philosophical ideas of Thomas Hobbs and Rousseau, society keeps us in line and gives people the opportunity to be good and grow productive. However, we can not allow ourselves to be “everywhere in chains” (McAlister imitating Rousseau). If we walk around unaware of what limitations or policies are around us, the vast machine of those who govern will take advantage.

Champagne calls the act of staying within ones boundaries while trying to achieve a goal “a game.” If people don't follow the rules of the game, then they can't play, and therefore they can't win. “If it is not done right [ex: corrupt government], and not functional [ex: government with no power], then there can be problems. Society would break down if there were no rules.” Yet, one thing remains, “without a certain amount of rules, nothing would happen,” said Champagne. “You have to play the game. How you get there and how creative you can be [within the rules] is open to the players.”

AHS History

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Blueprint Courtesy Photo/Akalan 1957

The Acalanes modern dance class of 1957 puts one of their two annual performances. All sophomore girls took the modern dance class, which was taught my Millicent Hamburger.

In the 200 wing, a boy walks toward the new shop area back behind the 400 wing to take his sixth, and final, period of the school day, auto shop. Getting prepared for his class, the student has to wear over his clothes a dark jumpsuit, permanently stained with splashes of oil and grease and a bit too short for him, the pant leg ending at the shin. Watching the teacher dismantle the engine and point out its parts that had to be replaced, he eyes the clock in the corner. 2:35. 2:38. 2:40, only five more minutes until the end of the period and the end of the day.

Looking around here, you are not about to see any girls toying with the cars. Barber remembers how one time she had wanted to take a mechanical drawing class (which was similar to today's architectual design), but her counselor would not allow it because she was female, and mechanical drawing was a class for males. Mary McCosker, who graduated in 1964, says that now she sees girls trying more classes, like auto shop or woodshop that she would have liked to take.

In other classes, the students are just as restless, waiting for school to end. In today's "small gym", which was then the only gym, students taking physical education, which was required for all four years, were finishing up their activities for the day. Girls started to fidget in their uniforms, consisting of a jumpsuit that started at the middle of the thigh and buttoned all the way up to the throat. A couple of girls are idly pick at the elastic all the girls had sewn into the bottom of their uniforms to keep the short outfits from blowing up and becoming too revealing.

Down the hall students of "Shorthand I" scribbled and typed furiously on long sheets of paper and typewriters. The students of "Shorthand I" wore navy skirts and white blouse, with few exceptions, because they were mostly girls, and for many of them, the hope of becoming a secretary was a promising career opportunity. The class promised a writing speed of 60 words per minute by the end of the year.

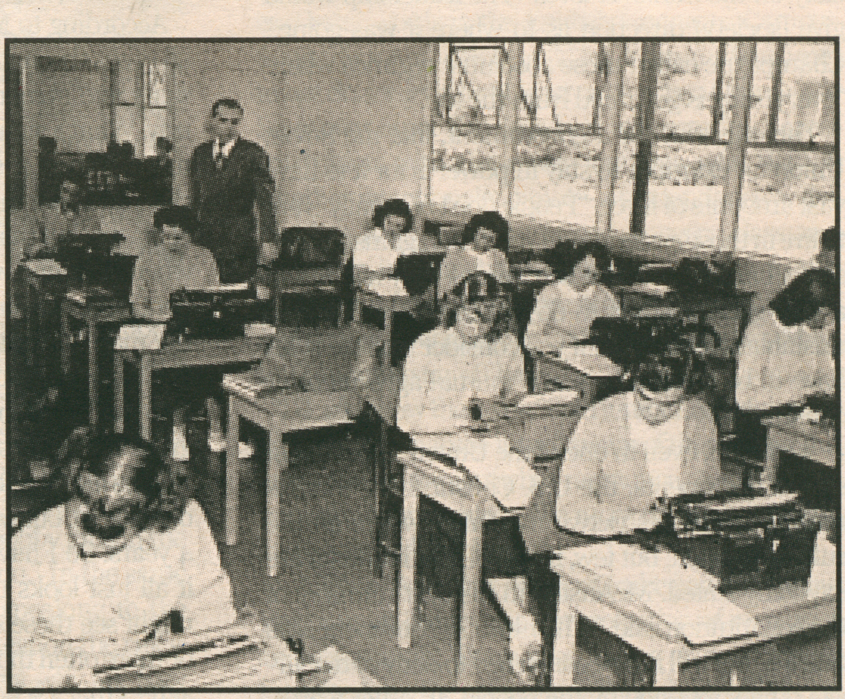
One girl in Shorthand I heard her stomach rumble in the quiet of the working class. She quietly scorned herself for forgetting her lunch money at home. The alluring smells of food lingered outside of the cafeteria, where the drama classroom is today. "We had a real honest-to-goodness cafeteria with real china plates," said Barber. Each student who bought lunch that day carried a plate of sliced, very well done roast beef, colorless canned peas, and mashed potatoes with gravy, that made her mouth water with hunger. Bob Warren thought otherwise though. "The school lunches were nothing to brag about," said Warren.

Finally, the dragging day ends, and students join up with friends to go have some fun. Several girls and boys head over to the Crystal Fountain in Lafayette for some of their famous homemade ice cream; it's just a quick walk into town. "After games and dances, Rick's Drive-In was a favorite spot. It was located at Pleasant Hill Road and Highway 24, where the interchange is now located," recounts Warren. Other students grab one of the Greyhound busses and head into Walnut Creek to Hokey's Drive-In where kids can relax and spend time with friends.

After a root beer float at the Crystal Fountain, a couple girls head over to Sutton's Shoes to go admire the new Spalding shoes. "It's the original saddle, with the tapered toe," entices the ad. On some Friday nights, you could head down to the Paramount or Fox in Oakland to see a double feature. "Downtown Oakland was really lovely. To buy your nice clothing you went to Oakland or San Francisco," said Barber. Or, to stay closer to Lafayette, kids head over to the Orinda Theatre to see a movie and grab a bite to eat, Mel's and Rickey's were favorite places by the theater.

As the afternoon wears on and students check their pockets, purses, and wallets more often, as the realization of how empty they've become sinks in. It's back to work soon to earn some cash to line their pockets with once again. Barber recalls one of the ways that many Acalanes students earned some money. "There were lots of pear orchards. During the summertime when the pears were ripe, we were hired to pick pears." Wearing special aprons and armed with a specifically sized ring that allowed you to measure a pear's width to see if the pear was big enough to pick, students earned their wages. After the pears came the almond harvest, and after almonds came walnuts, both of which also employed Acalanes students. The students were required to hull the tough outer shell of the walnut, leaving startling brown stains on their fingertips. To earn pocket money during the school year, students would often babysit for 15 cents an hour..

As the chilly evening approached, students head back to Acalanes, but in a more-light hearted spirit this time. The football season



Courtesy Photo/Akalan 1950

Dubbed "Dr. Dilling's dandy drummers" in the 1950 yearbook, the girls of Shorthand I type studiously a their typewriters. Some of these girls might be hoping to get a job as a secretary where typing skills would be essential.

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AHS History

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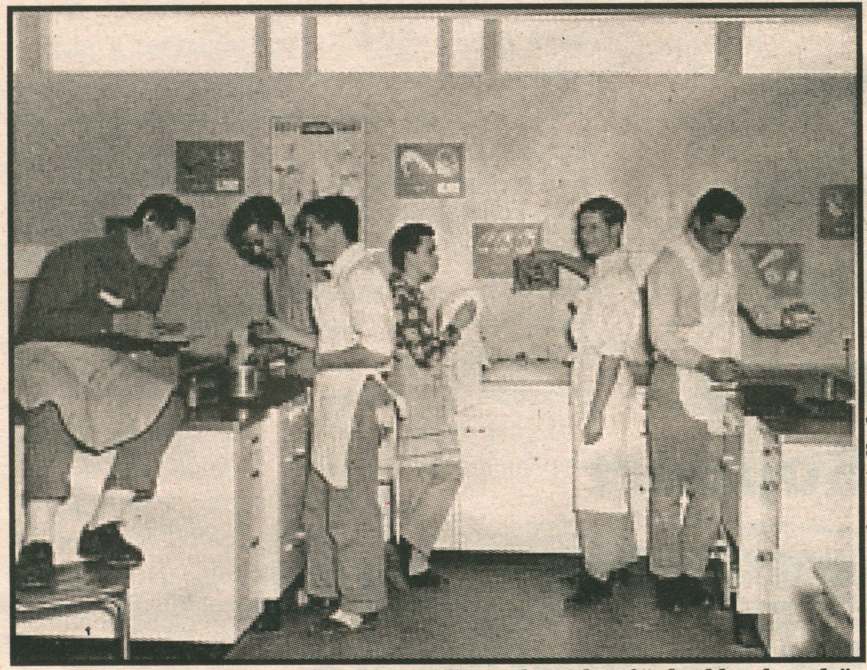

Courtesy Photo/Alkalan 1950

Learning to cook earned these students the title of "Ideal husbands" in the 1950 Acalanes yearbook.

was upon them. "The most important subject in any high school during fall was football," says the voice on the Acalanes Record of 1957 that highlighted the best parts of that school year. Barber, who was a cheerleader advisor, said that for all the games, the girls wore their father's white shirt over their regular clothing and cuffed the sleeves up. There was a special cheering section for people who wore special cheering attire. Mary McCosker said, "We actually watched the game, [it was not] just people milling around ... It was fun."

The night was cold, but the students cheered their team on who was playing one of their greatest rivals, the Las Lomas Knights. During the game, to help encourage the battling football team out on the green field, spectators bellowed out cheer songs like the "Acalanes Fight Song," "Blue-White," or "Fightum Dons Fightum." Instead of yelling "Beat Campo," as students might today, the cheer was the chorus of the Acalanes fight song: "Fight for Acalanes; Fight for the blue and white."

Eggertsen, who has known the school since the early 50's, said, "[The songs] were kind of corny, but it would be fun to hear it again." As hard as the fans yelled, as loud as the marching band played, and as spirited as the cheerleaders cheered, the Dons were losing the fight. It seemed like the undignified loss to the Knights would be recorded as 28 to 0, but in the last four seconds of the game all-county full back Stuart Busby recovered a blocked field goal and ran 65 yards to score a touch down and make the loss less desperate. The crowd rose to its feet in a unanimous movement and cheered for the fabulous play. The play was so remarkable; it was even immortalized onto the Acalanes record as one of the best moments of the year of 1957. Not much of a testament to the Acalanes football team of 1957, but proof that in the 1950s football really was "king," if this game was chosen as the the highlight of the year.

Other popular sports boys competed in were track, basketball, and baseball. Boys were seen running on a dirt track, no all-weather material was anywhere in sight, in uniforms of blue and white decorated with the winged sandal of Hermes. The hurdles were stiff wood bolted together that looked as if you smacked your shins on them you would be out for the race. The Acalanes track team was intimidating compared to the other schools of the time. "In 1950, our track team was the first in history to win a North Coast Championship from Contra Costa County," said track participant Bob Warren.

While the boys were heading out to the field to practice after school, the girls were staying on the sidelines. Girls could participate in the Girls Athletic Association, or GAA, where badminton, volleyball, archery, and basketball were popular. "We didn't play sports against other schools or anything, and [competitive sports] would've opened up so many more opportunities for girls," said McCosker

Even as popular culture has changed through the decades, Acalanes High School has managed to live through them all. Today's students can learn from the past thanks to tireless efforts of preservation on the part of people like Tom Eggertsen. Life has changed so quickly in 50 years, one minute it's "Operator, can you connect me?" The next you're speeding down the information highway. "It was more of a time of innocence [then]. There wasn't the Internet. There weren't cell phones, ipods, and things like that. It was more kind of like 'Leave it to Beaver'" said McCosker.

Future generations can help experience this time through efforts to capture memories of the past. Tom Eggersten has preserved these stories and pictures, creating several displays around the school, one in the main office and another in the Performing Arts Cener lobby. Both exhibits preserve artifacts and memorabilia dating back to Acalanes' inception in the 1940s. When the school was being rebuilt in the early 90's, he started to collect material that others were tossing out. He felt the need to preserve history for future students to see. Everything from old rally material to citizenship pins to scholarship awards is stored neatly away in his office. "I ended up becoming a self-appointed historian, just collecting stuff so that it doesn't get lost. I like the history of the school, there are a lot of interesting things about it that people don't know," he said.

"Secrets" Assembly

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"Secrets" has been performed for free in schools, health fairs, juvenile halls, college campuses, and even churches according to the performers. Jose Orduno, Eddie in the play, laughed, "We'll perform anywhere as long as we have space to put up our set. They want us, we'll be there." According to another actress in "Secrets," Charisse Loriaux, they have scheduled approximately 130 shows with one or two shows each day at different locations.

The actors and actresses in the live performance felt strongly about warning students about the dangers of AIDS. "We're affecting lives, we're help ing to save lives, and we're helping to make healthier choices. We don't always see the fruits of our labor, but we know that we are doing this for the greater good," said Samuel. For Marilet Martinez, the fifth performer in "Secrets," the most valuable part of the experience was when she got to individually help young people with the complicated issue of HIV and risky behavior. "When students come up to us personally and act us questions, and sometimes reveal intensely personally things to us, being able to help that person at that time in their life is really important to me," said Martinez.

The performance is traditionally shown to eleventh and twelfth graders; however, this time a decision was made to switch the audience to ninth and tenth graders. Nurse Dvora Citron explained, "We switched the grade level so kids could get the information before they need it instead of during or even afterwards." In switching the grade levels, the information regarding sexual behavior was given at a younger age in hopes that it would reach more students before becoming sexually active.

Current seniors and juniors will not be seeing the "Secrets" performance. Sophomore Maria Pestana felt like showing the performance to a younger audience was beneficial. "I think it was a good idea. It opens up people's eyes, especially for the freshman who are just transitioning from middle school to high school where things are different," she said.

Along with "Secrets," Kaiser Permanente has three other live performances: Zip's Great Day (about making healthy choices), P.E.A.C.E. Signs (about non-violent conflict resolution), and Nightmare on Puberty Street (about addolescence and growing up). "Secrets" was created in 1989 in response to the alarming increase of cases of STD infections among teenagers. Through an email interview, Dean Starnes said, "Kaiser Permanente created Educational Theatre Programs to inspire children, teens and adults to make informed decisions about their health and to build stronger, healthier neighborhoods."

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What Makes it M'm! M'm! Good?

You don't want to know

I am a terrible cook. I have found over the past 17 years that I am one of the few people with the unique ability of being able to scorch water. Now, it seems that this is going to be a problem with college and independence fast approaching. At first I thought that I could just partake in a frozen/pre-prepared foods only diet, but, on further inquiry, I have found that Rice-a-Roni is really only called "The San Francisco Treat" because the MSG-infested cancer-causer is a little too truthful to make for good advertising and Campbell's makes its soup "M'm! M'm! Good" with chemicals that I would expect to find in fertilizer or in the dumpsters outside of a non-kosher hot dog factory.

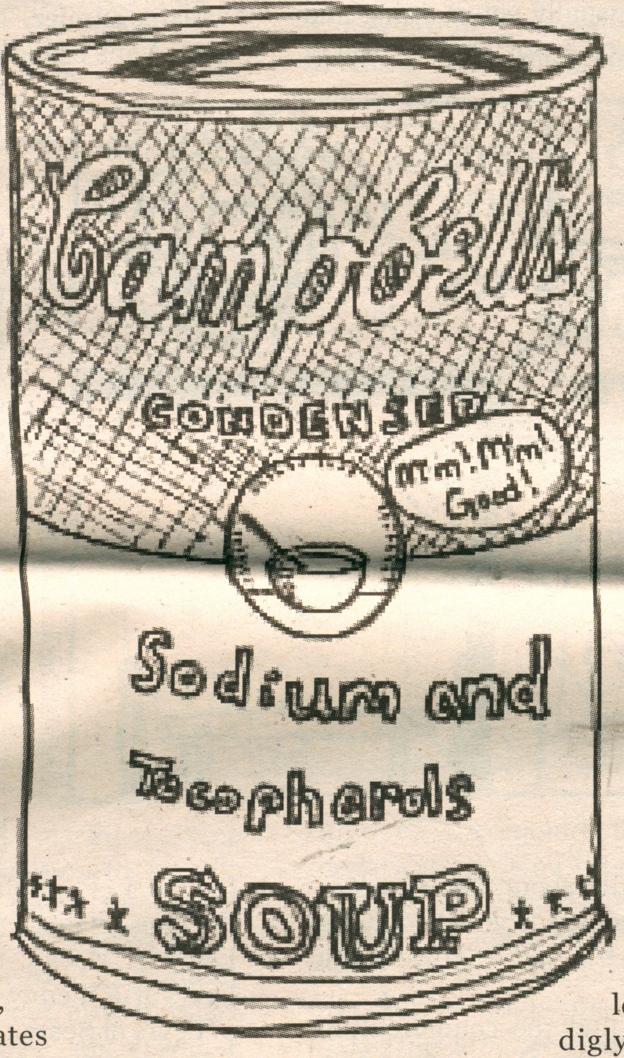
Now, I know that when you look at the cover of a box of Chicken (flavor) Rice-a-Roni, you see a hazy image of something green and probably healthy, and then a close up on a very *tidy scoop of what* appears to be a delicious/greasy, carbohydrate saturated food substance. As appealing as that may sound, I invite you to check out the right side of the box, just above the "Quality Guaranteed" note. Don't bother calling. They don't know what disodium guanylate, disodium inosinate, or monosodium glutamates are used for either besides just making it extra, extra, EXTRA salty.

Now, I like salt as much as the next person, but, according to my research , monosodium glutamate (MSG) is a nerve impulse transmitter in the brain that has been linked to Alzheimer's disease and Huntington's chorea. Now, these symptoms have only shown up in injected laboratory animals in the 1980s and, well, the 80s was full of hair metal and spandex pant-suits so that leads it to be somewhat suspect... However, obscenely bad taste aside, I'm really not sure that I want to be ingesting something that has been proven to have made dogs forget how to wag their tail and eventually die of horrible, degenerative dementia-related diseases. Oh well, its easy to make and I don't have a tail to forget how to wag anyway.

As for the good ol' American classic, Campbell's soup, while the original is slightly more reliable as long as you remember to add water to the condensed soup I would like to violently steer you away from the dreg called "Soup at Hand." Fear it. Fear it deeply. You'd think that with something called "Mexican Style Fiesta" there would be some water (hopefully not infested with dysentery), some tomatoes, chicken, and something corn-based. When I checked the ingredients I was disappointed to see that the only real ingredient in there that I had hoped for was tomato (in the form of paste.) There was something corn-based if you count high fructose corn syrup as a vegetable, but, then again, if I was going to get my vegetable intake through corn syrup I might as well just chug the stuff in cans of peaches. At least that doesn't taste like sewage...

So besides the corn syrup, what makes Campbell's so M'm! M'm! Good! seems to be modified food starch, salt, soy lecithin, mono and diglycerides, 2,400mg of Sodium, and tocopherols (probably not all that unrelated to Taco Bell). Now, while I can actually pronounce most of those ingredients (and thus they can't be *that* bad for me), again I am led to believe that any food substance that can more-than fulfill my daily requirement of any supplement in one 10 ¾ ounce sitting cannot be good for me.

Basically, the problem is that either processed food companies just don't care about the health or quality of their product, or they're secretly trying to kill us all. The only real solutions that I can see are to either stop eating all together, import an illegal immigrant from your ethnic food indigenous nation of choice, or actually learn how to cook... Gee, I sure do like burritos; I know I've got that fake passport lying around here somewhere...



Blueprint Cartoon/Ellie Fox

ACALANES BLUEPRINT

opinion

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Do you have any opinions to share?

Write a letter to the editors of *Blueprint*, and bring it to room 209!

The Way I See it

Sun Valley Mall summed up in a few painful words

By Brendan Lehman
Staff Writer

For most, a trip to the mall is regarded as a fun-filled shopping extravaganza. For me it usually means nausea, boredom, frustration, confusion and a heightened sense of, but lowered respect for, America's mall and shopping culture at large.

Pulling into one of the several parking lots which are big enough to support a Grateful Dead concert, I usually begin to regret my presence, as I know I am about to enter a place that I despise, a place where people fight violently for the parking spot ten yards closer to the entrance than the rest of the open spots. Does this reflect our culture?

As I finally park in one of the seemingly endless fields of parking spaces, I note the people, generic trailer trash of all races and creeds, lugging bags of every size and hue back to their automobiles. Moms with their little kids are carrying, no, hauling loads of crap back to their full-size SUV's as "ghetto" people are hauling loads of crap back to their full-size SUV's, as everyone else hauls loads of crap back to their full-size SUV's.

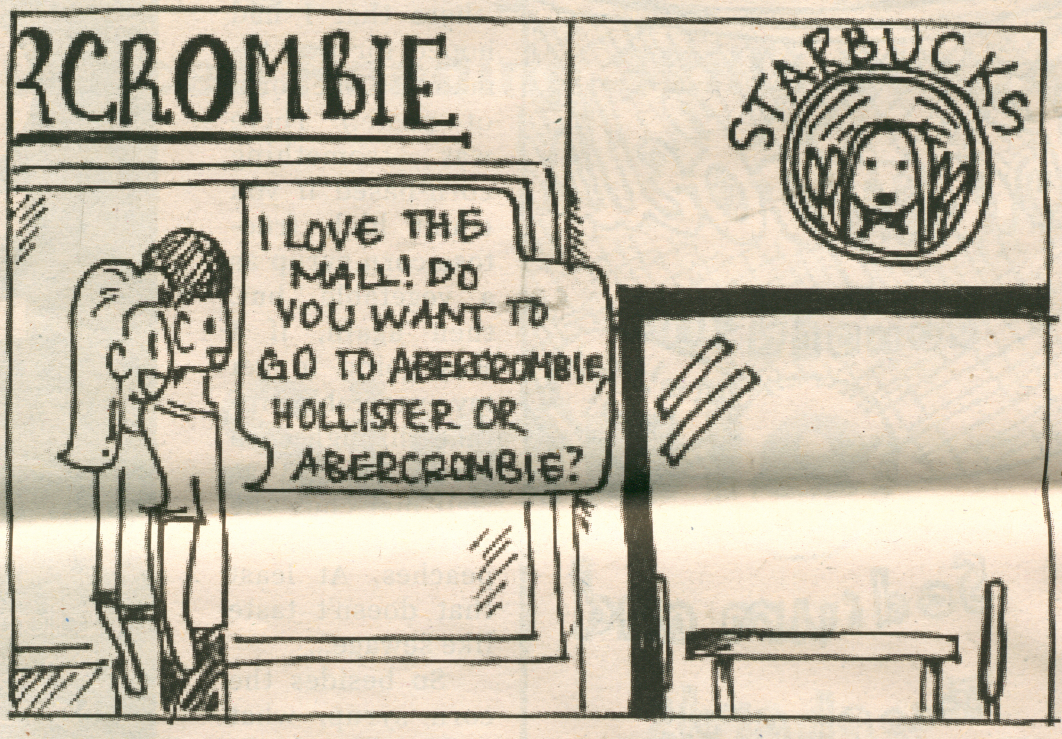
Entering the mall, for me at least, has always been a disorienting and humbling experience. Unlike the other 99.9 percent of the time that I enter buildings, walking into the mall is somewhat like being eaten by a giant monster, being crammed into a vast colon region in which the sentient dregs of society constipatedly "hang out." How is it that in such an enormous amount of space, you barely have room to breathe, and feel as if you were being squeezed down the intestine of this giant mall monster while you walk down the main thoroughfare?

So, as I squeeze my way through the jungle of bodies in search of a shop at which to purchase a pair of shoes, my attention is directed to the people surrounding and suffocating me. I decide upon a way of classifying the mall-goers present on this warm and sunny (although they wouldn't have noticed) Saturday afternoon.

First, there are the ghetto people. Ghetto-ites often waddle by holding their pants up with one hand and making violent gestures with the other, mumbling something along the lines of, "yeeah g, wassuh crakin," or, "daaammmnn...she fine."

Second, I encountered the mom with nothing better to do than take her little kids shopping while her husband is at work. Some of the nastier ones have no second thoughts about making a public display by yelling at their children to not stray more than six inches or to not touch this or that.

The most common classification tends to be rich teenage girls. These groups of trendy, miniskirt and Ugg wearers often travel in immense packs. You can generally find them trying on just about every article of clothing in every store present from Abercrombie and Fitch to Abercrombie and Fitch. A trip to the mall for them is unusually entertaining and is somehow considered a worthwhile form of weekend activity. Walking out, they are guaranteed to be carrying bags from such diverse stores as Hollister, A&F, and even American Eagle Outfitters.


RCROMBIE
STARBUCKS
I LOVE THE MALL! DO YOU WANT TO GO TO ABERCROMBIE, HOLLISTER OR ABERCROMBIE?

Blueprint Cartoon/ Sophie Benjamins

Finally, you can find the counterculture kids... Unfortunately for them, they have proved to be pictures of oxy-moronity just by fault of their presence here at Sun Valley. They usually show up for the sole purpose of purchasing spikes and patches at Hot Topic and maybe if they realize five black t-shirts bearing the name and logo of their favorite punk/metal band that they already have isn't enough, they'll pick up another. If they are feeling really spontaneous, maybe even a new studded belt or some black and white checkered everything.

Unfortunately for me, the Vans store happens to be at the farthest end of the mall from where I parked and entered. I am thus forced to turn and spend the next ten minutes on a long and arduous trip to where I honestly wish I did not have to be.

I was shocked and appalled when I learned that the price of a pair of black, old school Vans had hiked up to 55 dollars since the last time I had been there. When did Vans go corporate on my ass? I'm sure that the price of rubber, cotton, and Asian labor hasn't risen 200 percent since I last purchased my shoes for almost half of that. And how come entering the store reminded me of Baskin Robbin's in that each shoe came in 31 different colors? Who wants shoes with yellow and purple checkers on them?

Anyway, what I noticed next was really what made me notice the sheer stupidity of the mall in the first place. Across from the hall from Vans is Zumiez. This establishment sells the same Vans brand shoes at the same price. Directly below Vans is Mainland, which sells the same Vans brand shoes for the same price. Just to the left of that is Journey which sells the exact same Vans brand shoes for the same price and just across the hall is PacSun which, yes, you guessed it, sells the exact same Vans shoes for the exact same price.

Auntie Anne's Pretzels is exactly twelve feet above Wetzel's Pretzels. They charge the exact same price and feature the exact same concoction of flour, yeast, salt and heat. All the punk kids need to decide is whether to buy their spiked bracelets at Spencer's or Hot Topic. And gone are the days of simplicity when one didn't have to choose between buying a 39 dollar pair of Levi's at Macy's, buying a 39 dollar pair of Levi's at JC Penny, and buying a 39 dollar pair of Levi's at Sears.

Competition is good, but isn't this overkill? Sure, maybe each store is a little more unique that their labels and signs, but is it not utterly absurd that there is a complex as vast as the Sun Valley mall that contains so much of the same?

Does it reflect our culture that you are as unique as the store you buy your clothes at? That there is a chain establishment to buy punk gear?... a trend that used to be about being yourself. Isn't it a little odd that Converse, the once signature shoe of the social deviant, has been bought out and corporatized by none other than Nike?

So anyway, I left the mall fifty-five dollars poorer and three pounds of rubber, canvas and cheap Chinese child labor richer, not to mention sore-legged and thoroughly flustered. I walked back to my car donning an oversized and over-advertised bag that made

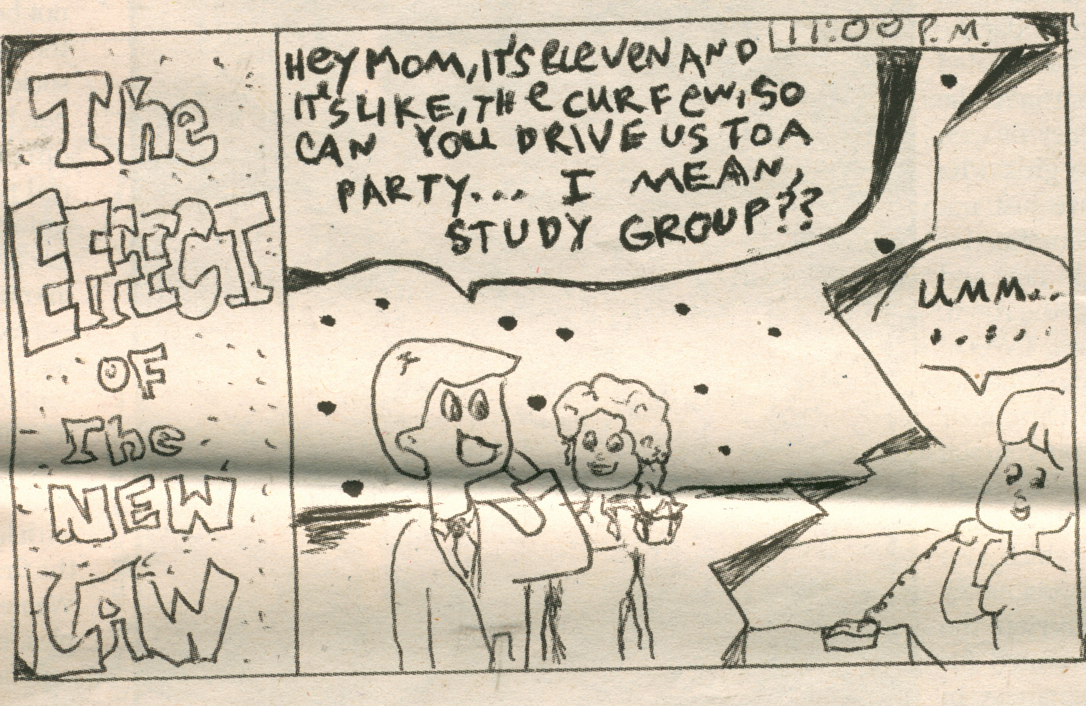
Driving Me Crazy

New driving laws defy reason and lower curfew to sophomoric standards

By Oscar Cuming-Timms
Staff Writer

Feeling the sand squeeze out between your fingertips is a relaxing idea for some. But, imagine for a moment that the sand represents a privilege which has been given to you after six months of waiting, six months of submitting to the firm grasp of the law. But now it is vanishing, falling through your fingers. Something you earned left you, torn from your grasp by some unnamed force. This time, that force has a name. It is...dun dun dun...the DMV.

Our society does not look kindly on those who take back what they gave. We do not idolize the restaurant owner who lets his customers have half a meal and then returns the dish to the kitchen. In fact, I might go so far as to say it's mildly irritating, though I might be stepping outside of reason.


The EFFECT of The NEW LAW
11:00 P.M.
Hey MOM, IT'S ELEVEN AND IT'S LIKE, THE CURFEW, SO CAN YOU DRIVE US TO A PARTY... I MEAN, STUDY GROUP?!?
UMM.. ....

Blueprint Cartoon/Christina Hirano

A new California law, with the elegant and catchy name of California Vehicle Code Section 12814.6, wrenches privileges which took six months to earn from the hands of law abiding, not yet tax paying people such as myself. The law stops all the dangerous people like me from driving with passengers in the same car for one year after the issuance of the license. This wouldn't be so bad if it weren't for the fact that for the past three or so months I could lawfully have passengers under the age of twenty in my car without a license holding twenty-five year-old present. Although I've had my license for about nine months and have proven that I am a safe driver, I find myself in the exact same spot I was in six agonizingly long months ago, but the betrayal doesn't stop there.

Just to rub salt into the wound, the curfew has also been moved to eleven at night from midnight. Midnight seemed a reasonable time for teens to get home over the weekend, and although I can't speak for all the other people, I followed the law, making it home every night before my car turned into a pumpkin. The reason they moved the time to eleven was that a statistic that showed the highest rate of teen driving fatalities was between eleven and twelve. Now, I would have thought the reason for this was obvious: that was the time when all the teen drivers were making their way home so that they didn't break the curfew. For these lawmakers however, it may not be as obvious as one would like to think. They decided that if they moved the curfew to include the hour when more teens were getting into fatal crashes, they would stop those fatalities. In future years, of course, their statistics will indicate that ten to eleven is the hour with the most fatal crashes. So, being the predictable creatures they are, the lawmakers will continue to restrict the time even more.

But where do we draw the line? Do we wait until the only places a teenager can drive for the first year of their license is to and from school? Although the new law was passed with good intention, now young drivers will just be rushing to get home by 11 instead of 12 so they don't get in trouble with their parents or get arrested. There is then, logically, no reason for changing the curfew hours.

The new law took away privileges that were earned by people who follow the law without warning and for reasons that are not extremely well thought out, to say the least. We used to be able to take passengers without an adult, but now we can't, and the void it left behind is as black and comforting as the roads we once could drive.

I suppose that the peak in death rates does mean one good thing. Teenagers are following the letter of the law, which is exactly what the lawmakers want. They should be glad that their laws are being followed, even though the only indicator to that fact rears its head above the seas of this wonderful, efficient bureaucracy as a gruesome statistics creature with bar graphs for arms and a heart as black as printer ink.

Although the set of circumstances is deeply enraging at the present time, the frustration of those who were once allowed to carry passengers will pass with time and soon their licenses will pass the one year mark, their engines roaring, and the unrestricted privileges of driving will be returned to their hands once more. For those few caught in between, the sour taste of the whole issue will disappear entirely and people who got, or will get, their licenses after the law was passed will never encounter the same sense of loss, never knowing the law to turn upon its most obedient subjects.

I suppose it was slightly naïve of me to expect anything more than what I got from the lawmakers who busy themselves modifying existing laws. They don't follow logic as described by any normal person and are completely blind to anything around them, much like many bottom feeding fish. I hope that in time I am proven wrong about these fish that swim the seas of society and that their efforts, which are probably meant with the best of intentions (I think, it's really very hard to tell through the mists of stupidity that surround laws like this one), pay off by saving lives and making society a better place.

But I don't think I will be.

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The Mothers on the Bus go Shh, Shh, Shh!

Social stigmas and the need to deny unplanned pregnancy

By Kristen Darrell
Guest Writer

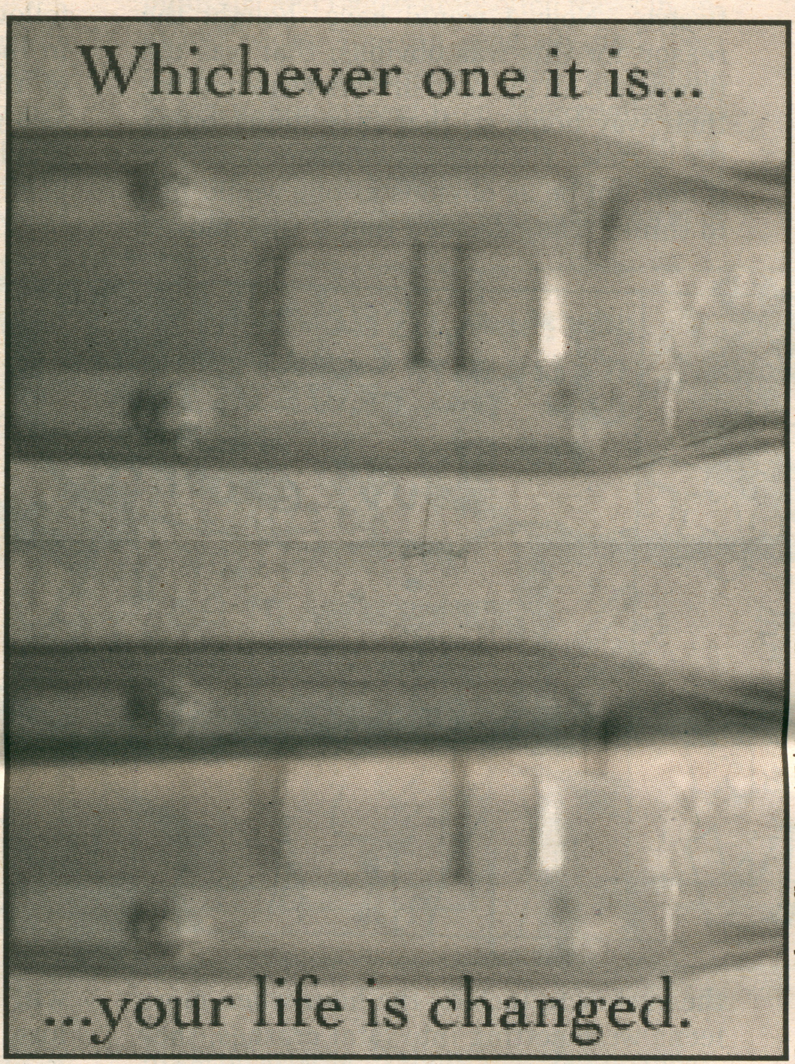
Roe v. Wade, teen mothers, Planned Parenthood, child support, abortion. All of these conjure up a melting pot of images and emotions for people from all backgrounds. Teens especially have a unique sensitivity to this topic because of the harsh stigmas surrounding the subject, not to mention feeling like one is too young for a traumatic event like pregnancy or abortion to occur. But then, with all that society has unprepared them for, how do teens react to the spectrum of psychological aftermath to an unplanned pregnancy?

How, exactly, did Lamorinda come to make teen pregnancy such an "under the rug" topic? Our community has created psychological warfare on two fronts: the people who deny the frequency of teen pregnancy/abortion, and the girls who suffer alone because they are just not aware of how common their situation is.

Look up from reading right now and observe the number of girls in the room. For every five girls that you see, TWO of those will experience a pregnancy before the age of twenty. Surprised? Outraged? Couldn't care less because you yourself will never become pregnant? Well, tough luck, because that is the statistic of 2005 for the beautiful U.S. of A., which also experiences the highest teen pregnancy rate of any industrialized country in the world. California alone accounted for 16% of United States teen pregnancies in 2005, and keeps it's rank of state number seven for teen pregnancy rates (stepping on the heels of Florida and Texas).

Your reaction, if especially if you happen to be a parent, teacher, young student, or male might be denial. How can this happen in such a highly educated, comfortably affluent, beautiful, perfect setting such as Lamorinda? Well, it does, and perhaps more-so than we're quite willing to admit. Why else would there be a Planned Parenthood within a 10 minute driving distance from Acalanes? Lamorinda is far from the mental image of an "at risk" community, laden with drugs, STDs, teen pregnancies... but, wait, we just described Lamorinda! If you don't know about the issues of meth, pot, and drinking, just open up a few old *Blueprints*, we're not going there right now. But STDs and teen pregnancies are still a very accurate description of the haven we love. Although there are no pregnancy statistic available for Acalanes, if we followed the two of every five girls statistic mentioned earlier, about 64 girls graduating this year will have had a pregnancy sometime in their teenage years.

Few, if any, teen pregnancies are planned and the very term "teen pregnancy" holds a strongly negative connotation, but more important than the social stigmas surrounding the idea and public image of a teen (especially single) mother should be less important than concerns for the long-term psychological and emotional effects on those involved. The suffering of teen pregnancy can have the ability to far exceed any physical pain of surgical abortion or child birth. After an abortion, whether surgically or by means of a pill, the emotional impact is something which few people outside this situation are ever likely to experience.



Courtesy Photo Illustration/ Kristen Darrell

When it comes to a pregnancy test, one line makes all the difference.

For all events, there is a mental and emotional process to bring closure. When an unexpected event happens in a person's life, justification is the first step after the shock of being caught off-guard. To justify an event is to find a blame for the result or to bestow responsibility somewhere, and for the case of pregnancy will logically fall on the two parents of the unborn child.

Because the girl is the member with the responsibility of actual physical carrying of the child, sole responsibility for her own body can easily become confused with sole responsibility for the pregnancy, and ultimately the abortion.

Feelings of guilt, shame, and regret bloom like a garden from the soil of self-hate for what happened because of the perceived sole responsibility. To cope with these feelings, turning to the other partner is the relapsed response, but what happens when someone turns around and there's no one there? Having one teen partner leaving the other after an abortion, especially if it's very shortly afterwards, can open up an entirely new level of suffering and doubt about yourself and your previous actions. And on top of it all, the teen will be alone in a mix of kids with the exact same problems, unable to publicly address it because of the social stigmas surrounding the topic.

Unfortunately, even after the abortion the whole ideal is far from resolved. While an unexpected or unwanted pregnancy may not be something that's easy to talk about, there is something deeply wrong with a society that makes a girl afraid to tell even her best friend about this monumentally difficult event for fear of becoming a social pariah: socially outcast because of an unfortunate accident. These pregnancies are far from isolated incidences. If we were allowed to look at the occurrence from a personal instead of a statistical viewpoint we would be able to better identify the best course of action, which is obviously not to try the 9th grade sex ed *scare tactics (sex = STDs = death)*. To achieve the final, resounding solution of a safer community with less teen pregnancy/abortion is to take the first and hardest step: wave the red flag. We need to get the message out to the couples, especially the girls, that they are not and never will be alone. There are endless resources not only online, but also right in the area. Below are a list of resources for teen in ANY situation.

-Planned Parenthood
(Call to ask questions, schedule same-day appointments for Emergency Contraceptives etc)
1357 Oakland Blvd., Walnut Creek 94596
(925) 935-3010
http://www.plannedparenthood.org

-Teen Wire
(Sexual health info site for teens sponsored by Planned Parenthood)
http://www.teenwire.com

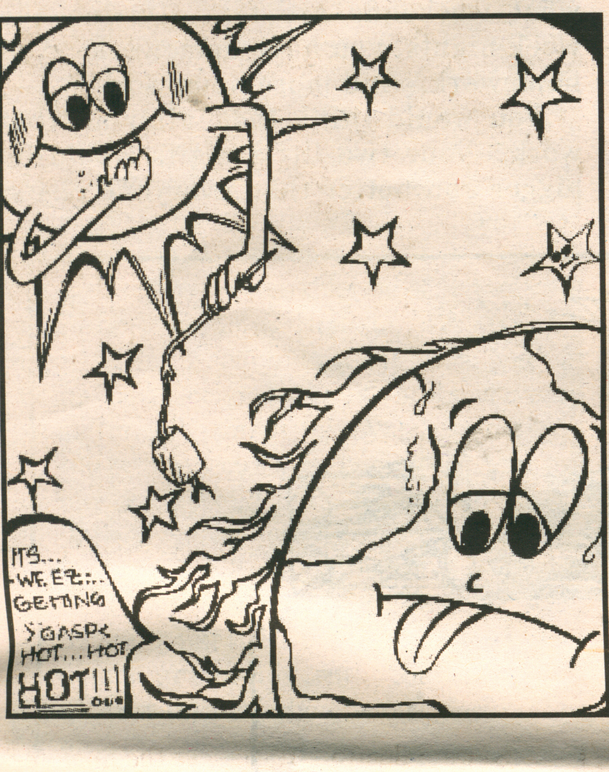
-National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy
(Statistics about United States teen pregnancy)
http://www.teenpregnancy.org
http://www.secondlookproject.org

-TeensHealth
(Variety of information about all types of teen health including but not limited to mind, body, sexual health, fitness, drugs/alcohol, school)
http://www.kidshealth.org/teen/

You can ALSO contact Kristen Darrell through *Blueprint* if you have more questions about this article.

Editorial Cartoons

Do you have artwork, editorials, cartoons, or anything interesting and worthwile to share? Come to room 209 with your name and your work, and we'll get you published!


ITS...
-WE.EZ:..
GETTING
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HOT... HOT
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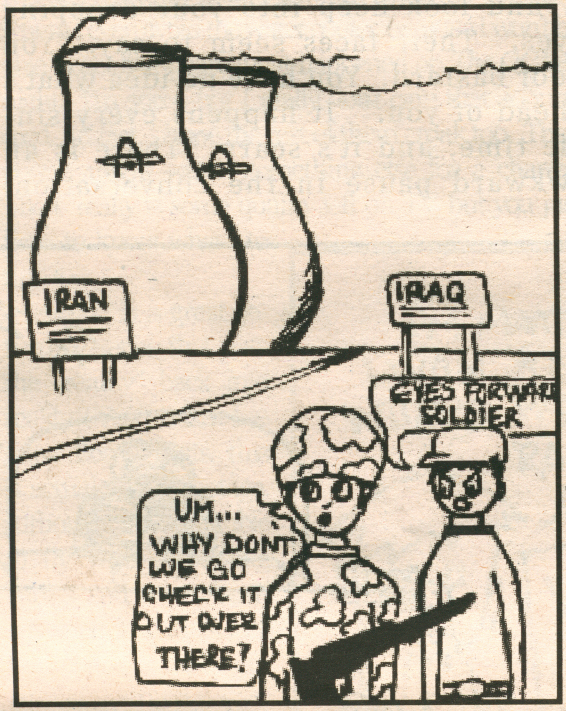
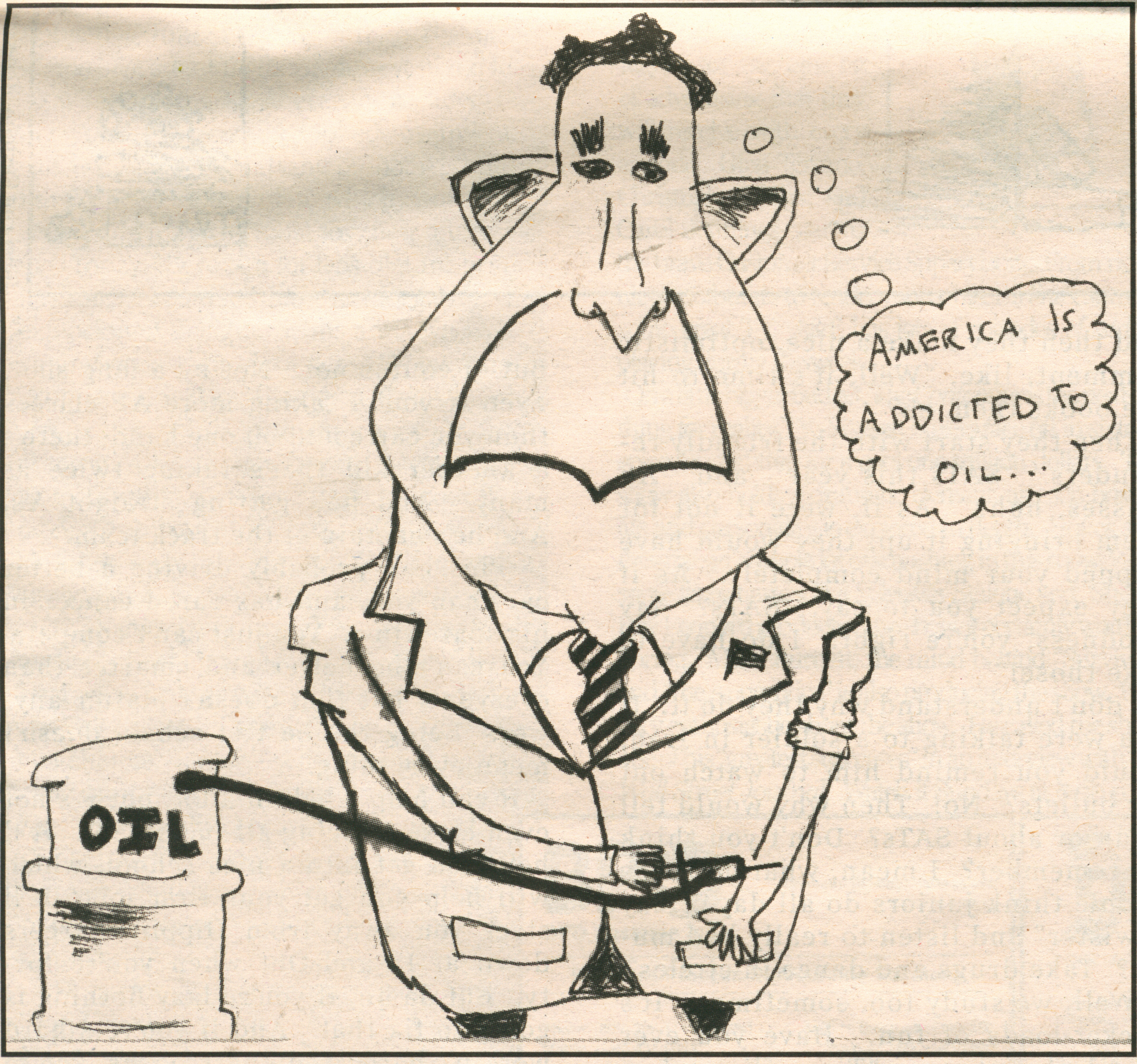
Blueprint Cartoon/Christina Hirano


IRAN
IRAQ
EYES FORWARD SOLDIER
UM... WHY DONT WE GO CHECK IT OUT OVER THERE!

Blueprint Cartoon/Rebecca Gray


AMERICA IS ADDICTED TO OIL...
OIL

Blueprint Cartoon/Aaron Breslow

Letter to the Editor

This letter was submitted to the Blueprint advisor on January 5, 2006, but due to human error it was not put into the most recent (January 13, 2006) issue. We apologize for the untimely manner in which this letter was printed and we welcome any further letters to the editor. However, to reduce the likelihood of human error, we must request that all further Letters to the Editor be sent to acalanesblueprint@gmail.com

Responsible Reporting

To The Editor,

This letter is a response to the article on American Sign Language (ASL) that was published in the December issue of Blueprint. I believe that Blueprint and their advisors have a responsibility to report in a comprehensive manner. The article made reference to possible adding ASL to the list of foreign language classes offered at Acalanes High School in the near future. However, not one member of the foreign language department was interviewed to express his/her opinions or knowledge of the subject. It would be detrimental to any department if academic classes were implemented solely on the basis of a staff member or student's personal interest. Discussions need to occur, curriculum needs to be studied, and instructional council members and administrators need to come to a consensus. Reporters should gain knowledge from the expertise of foreign language teachers who are continuously trained in their methodology and improve curriculum on a daily basis. At Acalanes High School the foreign language teachers hold over 120 years of teaching experience combined, so a discussion of foreign language program changes that does not take into account their opinions is alarmingly incomplete and one-sided.

Sincerely,
Señora Holland,
Foreign Language Department Chair

ACALANES BLUEPRINT

arts

Inside:

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Underrated TV Shows pg. 23
Fashion Column pg. 23
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If you are interested in having your artwork in the newspaper, contact Blueprint in room 209. We would love to see your work.

So Close, Yet so Far

A disenchanted look at the infamous junior year

By Robert Carrington
Arts Editor

A funny thing happens when you tell older folks that you're a junior this year. The words hit them, and their smiles fade. They nod solemnly and look deep into your drooping eyes. Their faces seem to say, "You poor bastard. You have no idea what's ahead of you." It happens every single time, and it's scary. There is an awkward pause in the conversation, and then they make a nice, optimistic comment, like, "Well, it's time to hit the books then, eh?"

Then they start with the friendly reminders. "SATs this year" and "AP classes, huh?" As if, were it not for them bringing it up, they would have slipped your mind completely. As if they expect you to say, "SATs? My goodness, you're right! I do have to take those!"

I don't understand why they do it. If you were talking to a soldier in Iraq, would you remind him to watch out for bullets? No! Then why would tell a junior about SATs? Don't you think we remember? I mean, what do these people think juniors do all day? Play "Twister" and listen to really bad music? Take drugs and dance in circles?

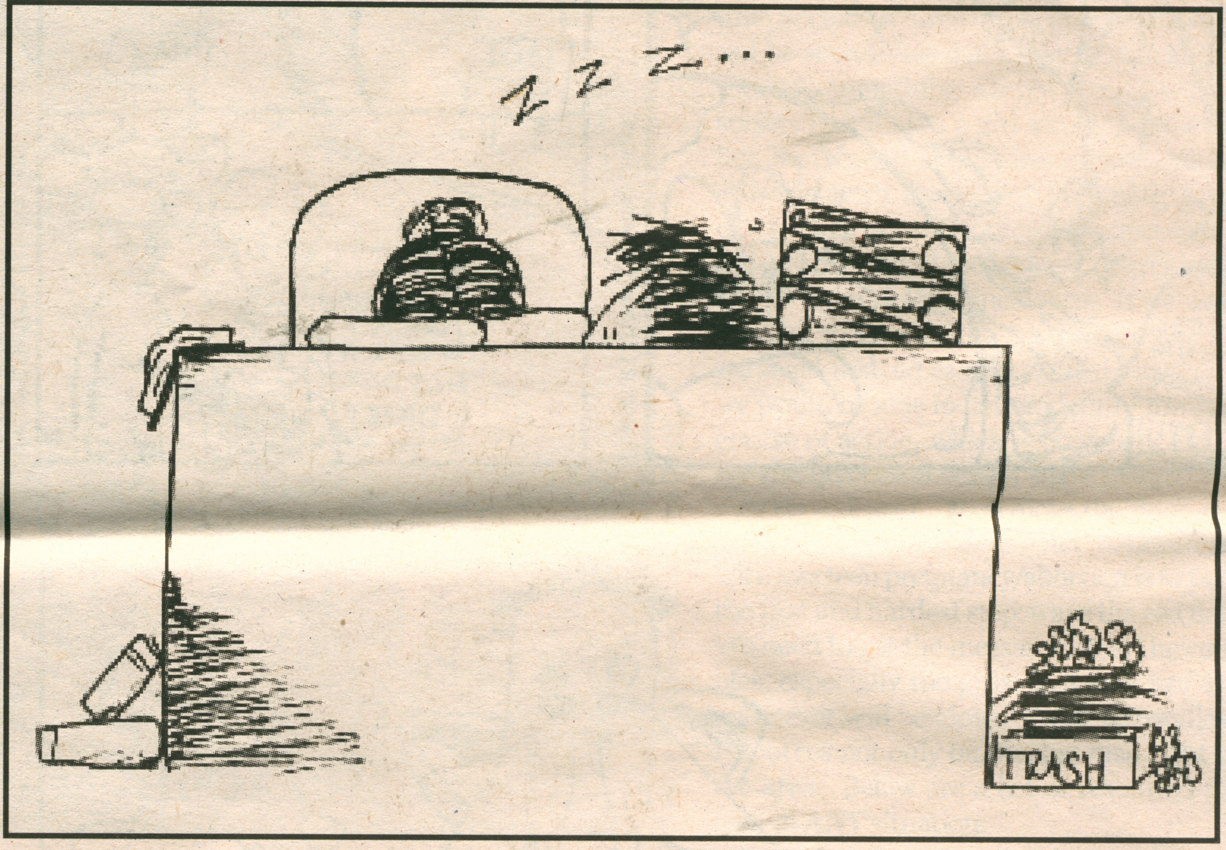
Well, we study too, sometimes. It's bucket-loads of fun. Have you ever heard the phrase, "Time flies when you're studying?" Me neither. There's probably a reason for that. It might have something to do with the fact that studying is just a little more boring than plucking arm hairs.

But you have to do it, because when you're a junior, your GPA suddenly becomes your life. And sleep? That's what weekends are for. During the week nights, you have homework. And homework. And more homework.

You would think that, after all that work, your two little digits would be bigger and better than everyone else's. But of course not. Not by a long shot. Even if you're taking more AP classes than you can count on one hand, there's a another kid that's taking twice as many. And he's getting straight A's. And he's captain of the track team.

Plus he's probably driving a better car than you, and has cured cancer in his spare time. You just can't compete. You can't be better and smarter than everyone, but that doesn't matter anyway. Being the best at school doesn't mean everything.

It can help a hell of a lot, but it's not even close to being all-important. It'll help you get into a nice school, which will help you get your first job. It'll steer you away from flippin' burgers down at In-and-Out when you're forty. But damn, if you're lazy nothing is going to fix that. And if you're a hard workin', hard studying trooper, you're going to turn out just fine.



Blueprint Cartoon/Rebecca Grey

Fashion Focus

By Kristin Studeman
Editor-in-Chief

It is ironic, because in high school, people generally want to fit in and be like everybody else. Now, I am sure after that sentence, you are mentally squirming and responding in your head saying, " No! Not me. I want to be unique and special." This is a natural reaction because it is human nature to want to be something other than your average cotton; instead, we want to be the 500 thread count Egyptian cotton, the pure cashmere, and the fine silk. Or, perhaps you're more of the vintage denim, the leather, or the waffle weave.

So, should you dress the role of stereotypical Abercrombie or Hollister, sweatshirt-wearing high school student in hopes of being more accepted? Or, should you wear something that might set you apart from the crowd? As much as people pretend to accept the age-old phrase, "Don't judge a book by it's cover", we all know that especially in high school, the cover is the first thing we judge. Oftentimes this is a sad realization, but there is another more positive light amidst this truth. Your "cover" is an opportunity to show what's inside the pages.

In my past three years at Acalanes I have noticed a fundamental shift in the basic ideals of student fashion: more you and less "you" according to Abercrombie advertising. As a freshman, I looked around and saw far too many walking billboards, and I hardly need to articulate which companies were budgeting the most for their advertising. Today, there is a lot less blatant brand flashing. Of course I have not forgotten the explosion of designer jeans amongst women and even men of all ages (Seven Jeans, True Religion?) or the Juicy Couture empire, but now it is more chic to be discreet about it. Also, unique fashion finds, be it a watch, t-shirt, or shoes, that are found on a trip to Europe or purchased in a vintage clothing store are much more delectable than your local Old Navy graphic t-shirt.

This shift from brand bland to artfully androgynous fashions is the result of clever business stratagems by the fashion industry, celebrities (of course), and a deeper social change. Teenagers became fed up with conformity on the fashion front. Brands like Abercrombie became worn out, cliché, and frankly, boring. No one wants to read where your shirt is from. And remember, no one wants a bunch of the same books.

Don't forget that you are your own brand, so flash it.

Next issue: Prom fashion

What You Should Be Watching

Underrated and under-loved TV shows

By Jennifer Hirano
Staff Writer

With the big-shot shows on TV, you would think that there must be something worth watching. But, it seems that as much as these big-budget shows spend, you just can't buy quality TV. It's getting to the point where I even avoid the water cooler, because I won't be able to act like I care what happened on *The OC* last night. I'm sorry, but I really don't care that Johnny died. In fact, I hope the rest of them croak too. Then people might watch something else for a change. There really is some quality left on TV, but you just have to know where to find it.

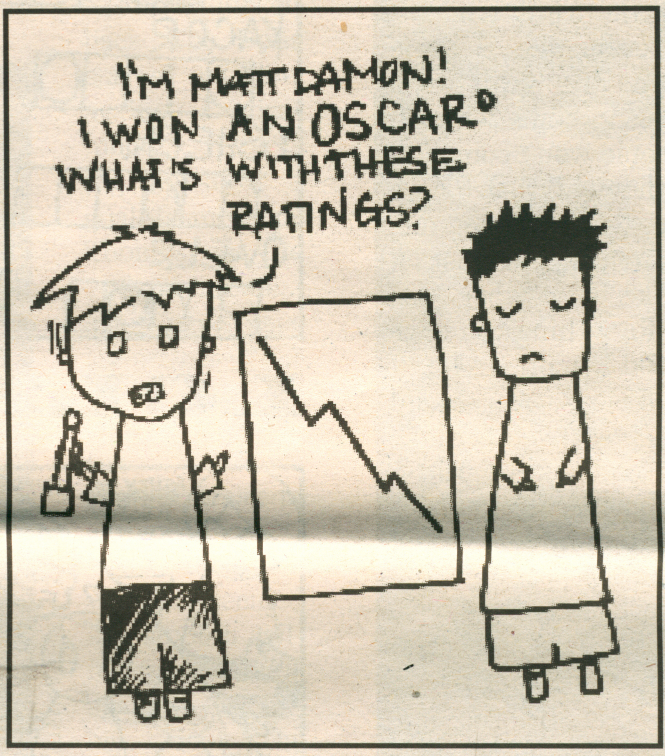
Airline is a great returning series that puts the "reality" back into reality TV. This isn't Laguna Beach Brats, this is actual airline footage. Although it's miserable to fly with screaming babies and angry businessmen in real life, all that chaos is really entertaining to watch from the comfort of the couch. Southwest Airlines let the cameras on their flights, for the nice bit of advertising that they will receive with every episode. Gina Terrano, Christopher Marr, and Carol Jennings star as the brave Customer Service Supervisors. From ridiculous outbursts to tender moments, *Airline* captures some great TV. A&E has lots of episodes of *Airline* playing during the week.

On a little bigger budget, *The Contender* is the next big thing for reality TV. Sixteen boxers face off in sixteen episodes, fighting for a cool one million dollars. The show also holds a dramatic element, as each boxer's life and personality is explored in depth. Hopes and dreams get a whole lot of smashing in this show. With some huge names like Sylvester Stalone and "Sugar" Ray Leonard producing the show, it certainly won't be boring. Mark Burnett, the mind behind "Survivor" and "the Apprentice" is also producing the show. He's very enthusiastic about the show. He called the show one of his "greatest successes" in an interview with the *Wall Street Journal.* Watch it Sundays at 8:00 p.m., on ESPN.

Most everyone has heard the feel-good success story of Matt Damon and lifetime partner Ben Affleck, but a whole lot of people haven't looked at the pair's television project. After coming into fame with the sleeper picture *Good Will Hunting*, Damon and Affleck decided that they wanted to give the struggling talents a chance like they themselves got. The idea behind *Project Greenlight* is simple: The many aspiring talents in screen writing send in their best stuff, and the best of the best is made into a movie... with the screenwriter directing. Changing the tone from the last two seasons, this time the movie is set to be a horror flick. The winner of this season is 47-year-old John Gulager from LA. To help out, *Project Greenlight* has called in one of the greatest horror directors of all time: Wes Craven. This one is a truly unique show, and you can catch it airing every Thursday at 10:00 p.m., on Bravo.

"The Starlet" is another competition-style show, with the promise of a real role on the WB series *One Tree Hill.* The actresses will live with each other in Marilyn Monroe's old house, which of course will lead to some real tension. Screen tests for these young stars will take place at a variety of famous movie locations such as the Bat Cave, from the Batman movies. In *American Idol* style, Hollywood legend Faye Dunaway (of "Bonnie and Clyde" fame) will lead a panel of judges to dismiss one girl every week, with the old "Don't call us, we'll call you." Jaime Kennedy, famous for his own show, is helping produce this one. See it on Tuesdays at 9:00, on the WB.

So please, everybody, at least take a peek at these shows. They really deserve a chance. I won't say that you have to... okay, maybe I will. You have to watch these shows, there's no choice. Afterwards, if you still want to go back and watch "The OC," that's fine.


I'M MATT DAMON!
I WON AN OSCAR
WHAT'S WITH THESE RATINGS?

Blueprint Cartoon/Sophie Benjamins

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Carrington's Corner

By Robert Carrington
Arts Editor

Dear Carrington: There's a friend of mine that I've known since middle school. We used to be really good friends until really recently. Now, she won't even talk to me or say "hi". What should I do to fix this? – **Dazed and Confused**

Dear Dazed and Confused: Well, you should probably slap her. No, sorry, don't do that. I'm just a little drunk with my own power. In all seriousness, I think you should try to think if anything you have done might have, in some way, offended her. Often people won't come out and say something; they will just hold a grudge against you until the day you die. If you can't think of anything, at least let her know that you like having her as a friend and are sorry if anything you have done might have pissed her off. Also, it might not be your fault at all. You should look at what made you both friends in the first place. Was it a sense of humor? A sport? Pokemon? Whatever it was, people change quite a bit from middle school to high school. Sometimes people don't feel at home with the friends they have had for a long time. It's hard to accept, but she might not want to be your friend anymore.

Dear Carrington: I think beanies are weird. What do you think? – **Stephen Chan**

Dear Stephen: I think you should get a life.

So those are all the letters I got. Well, I got some other ones... but they were not printable. You would not believe what some people come up with. Anyway, the point is that I will actually answer your questions. There will be a box where you can leave your letters in room 209, so go ahead and do it. I'd love to make fun of you next month.

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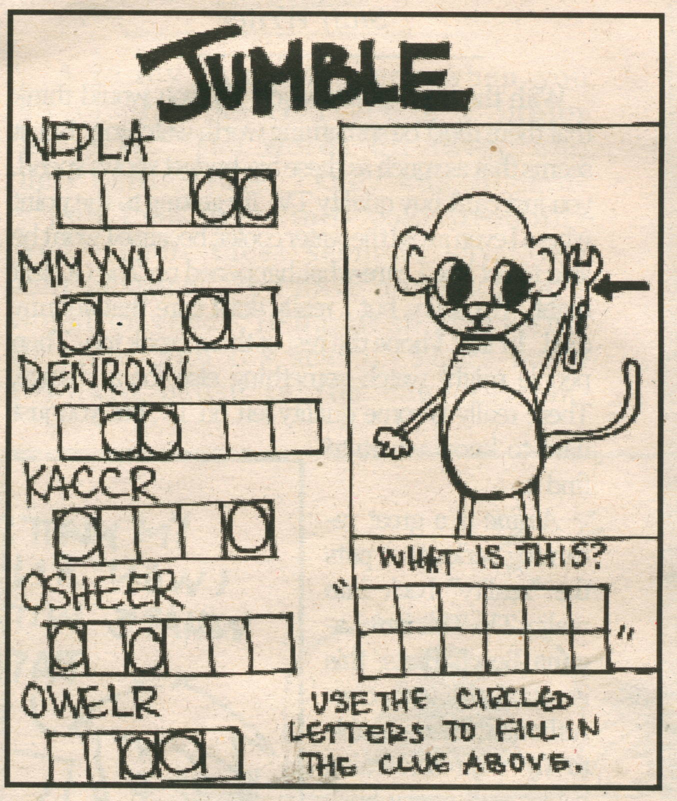
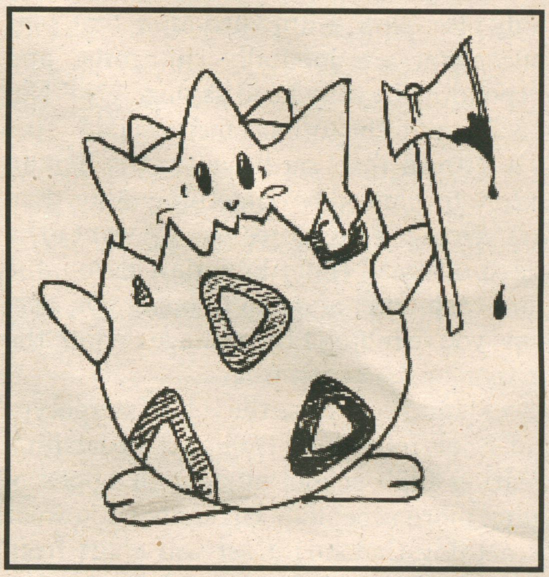
LIC #777855

The Amusement Page!

While the rest of Blueprint brings you the hard-hitting facts, the Amusement page will be dedicated to the entertaining stuff. Cartoon strips, puzzles, humor columns... you know, the stuff you really look for in a quality newspaper.



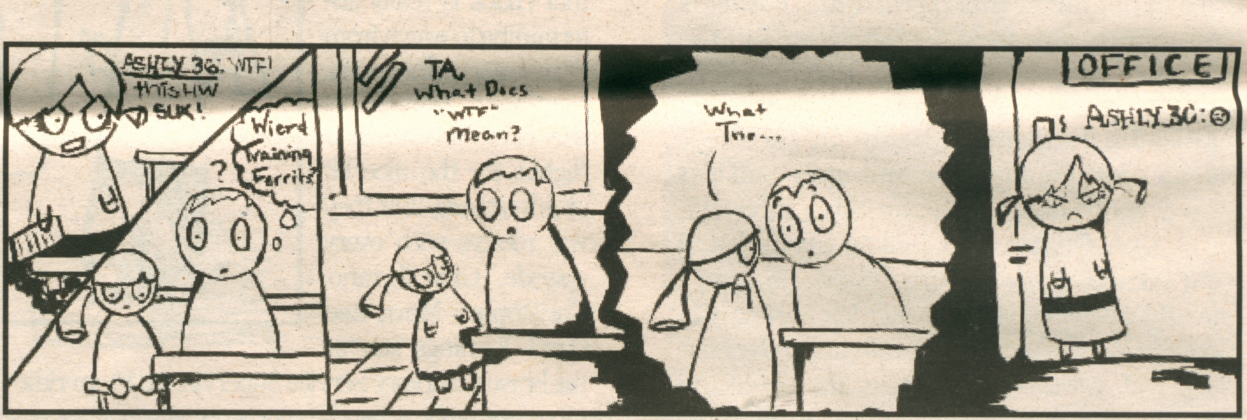


Blueprint Cartoon/Rebecca Gray

Pokemon: Role models for the new generation

LOLZ!

A cartoon for the Instant Messenger generation


ASHLY36: WTF! thisHW SUK!
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Wierd Training Ferrits?
TA, What Does "WTF" mean?
What The...
OFFICE
ASHLY36: ☹

Blueprint Cartoon/Sophie Benjamins

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				5				
9		7				1	4	
8		4	5		9	6		7
6	3	5	4			8		

Sudoku Puzzle!

Sudoku puzzles are solved by filling in the spaces to make each row, column, and square contain every number from one to nine. You can use the numbers already given to help you figure out how the numbers will all fit together.

The answer key will be posted next issue.

Dons' Defense Dominates

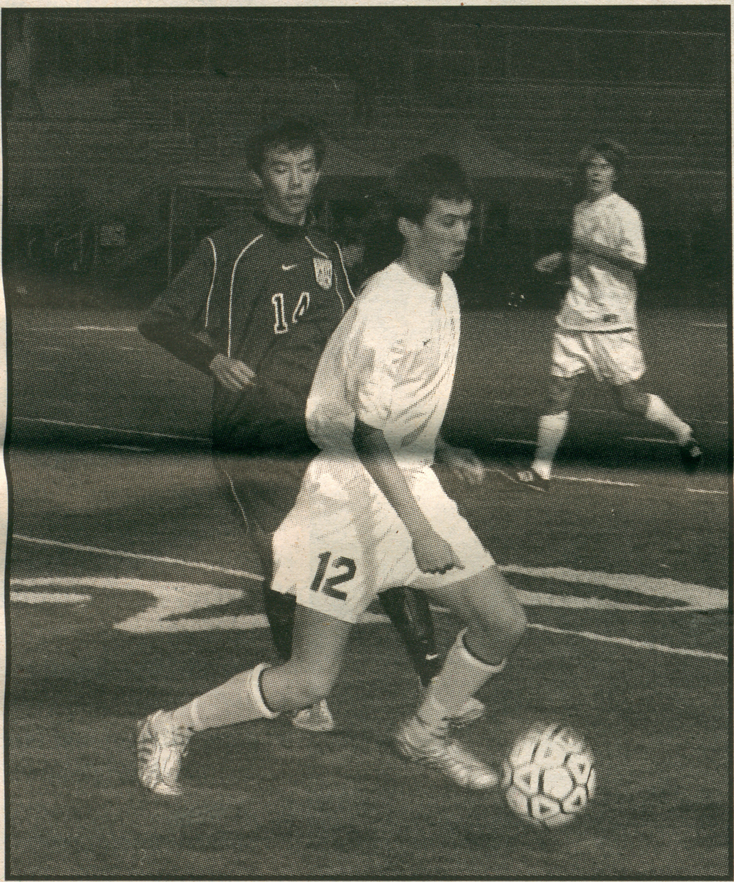
Twelve straight shutouts put them atop the DFAL

By Thomas Maher
Staff Writer

Watching the Acalanes boys' soccer team warm up is a lesson in discipline; a long row of matching black-clad legs jog in unison, comments to one another are hushed as each player waits patiently for each teammate to shoot.

Discipline and commitment have been the key to the Dons' success this year, and what a year it has been.

First place in DFAL has been the focus all year, but it has not been an easy battle. Every win in their 15-3-4 record has been matched by league rival Concord, making for a hotly contended race for the top spot.



Blueprint Photo/Marie Dieden

Senior Nate Lapating dribbles the ball upfield in the Don's shutout of the Las Lomas Knights.

First on the Dons' plate was Campolindo, a key win in the fight for first.

During a chilly night at the newly renovated Campo stadium, the Dons continued a shutout streak with a 1-0 victory over the Cougars, with the only goal scored by junior Joey Thomas in the 79th minute with the assist by sophomore Nick Cherne.

"It's been great knowing our defense can get it done each and every game," said Cherne after the win. Unfortunately, Concord continued to win and the Dons stayed one point behind them in the standings.

It was deja-vu for the Dons' impenetrable defense against Alhambra, allowing no goals and continuing the shutout streak. However, it was a new spark by the offense that really helped the Dons prevail over Alhambra. Untouched by the Alhambra defense, the Dons racked up five goals to continue their quest for first place. However, Concord continued to win, and the Dons found themselves still in second by that one measly point.

"We just got to keep winning and maybe we'll catch a break and Concord will lose," said freshman Adam Seperack. Hoping to catch a break against Las Lomas to pull ahead in the standings, the boys had to settle for a 0-0 tie, maintaining shutout status but falling farther behind Concord.

As the Dons began to lose hope of the receding first place spot, they focused on consistent defensive strength. Against Dublin, the team rarely found the ball on the defensive half of the field, keeping the pressure on Dublin's goalie. Evidence of the field strength of the Dons' defense was junior keeper Ryan McCowan's record for the game: no saves were credited. Unfortunately, the offense's inconsistency resulted in a 0-0 tie. Although it seemed like bad news for the Dons, who had already defeated Dublin earlier in the season, Concord finally lost and the Dons pulled into first.

Gaining first place, the Dons never looked back. The Dons started out slow against Miramonte, picking up after a goal from junior Thomas in the 79th minute... again, which gave the team another win 1-0 and, of course, elevate the infamous shutout streak to eleven games.

After the quick win, it seemed like smooth sailing for the Dons against Alhambra, and the team jumped out in front early and never turned around, scoring five goals by five different people and winning the game 5-0. The team's consistent defense was key in prevailing over Alhambra, and the winning streak continued to climb.

Unfortunately, after six weeks and twelve games of shutting out opponents, an easy win against Mt Diablo ended the no-scoring streak. After the Dons jumped to an early lead 3-0 with seniors Hertel, Andy Shumaker and sophomore Tommy Glascock all scoring, everyone knew the game was in the bag. As the Mt. Diablo offense tried to put pressure on the defense of the Dons, a left footed goal into the upper left hand corner that was just out of reach of McCowan's hands ended the Dons' hard earned shutout streak at twelve games. "The team overall played well in the first half, slumped down a little in the second but then picked it up at the end to secure the win," said assistant coach Edwin Mesones after the 3-1

continued on pg. 28

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Wrestling pg. 28
Girls' Soccer pg. 29
Column pg. 30
Athletes of the Issue pg. 32

Congratulations to Boys soccer, if the Dons win against either College Park or Campolindo, the team will clinch the DFAL league title.

Dons Get Offensive, In A Good Way

Offense explodes for multiple 80+ point games

By Dan Masi
Sports Editor

With the second half of the DFAL season about to begin and the schedule about to pick up in difficulty, the Dons offense finally awoke from its season long hibernation. After failing to score more than 55 points in 14 of their first 18 games, the Dons exploded for a combined 174 in consecutive victories over Dublin and Mt. Diablo.

"We've just been working to improve our transition game," said senior captain Gavin Beeman. "I think that's why we've been so dangerous offensively."

With a newly enhanced transition game, the Dons have been dominating opposing teams with the wrath of their offense. The Dons metamorphosis began with a road match against the Concord Minutemen. The game started out slower than the team had hoped. The Dons' sloppy shooting couldn't produce, leaving the Dons down 26-18 at the half. However, the second half became a stage for the offense to shine after a 180-degree turn.

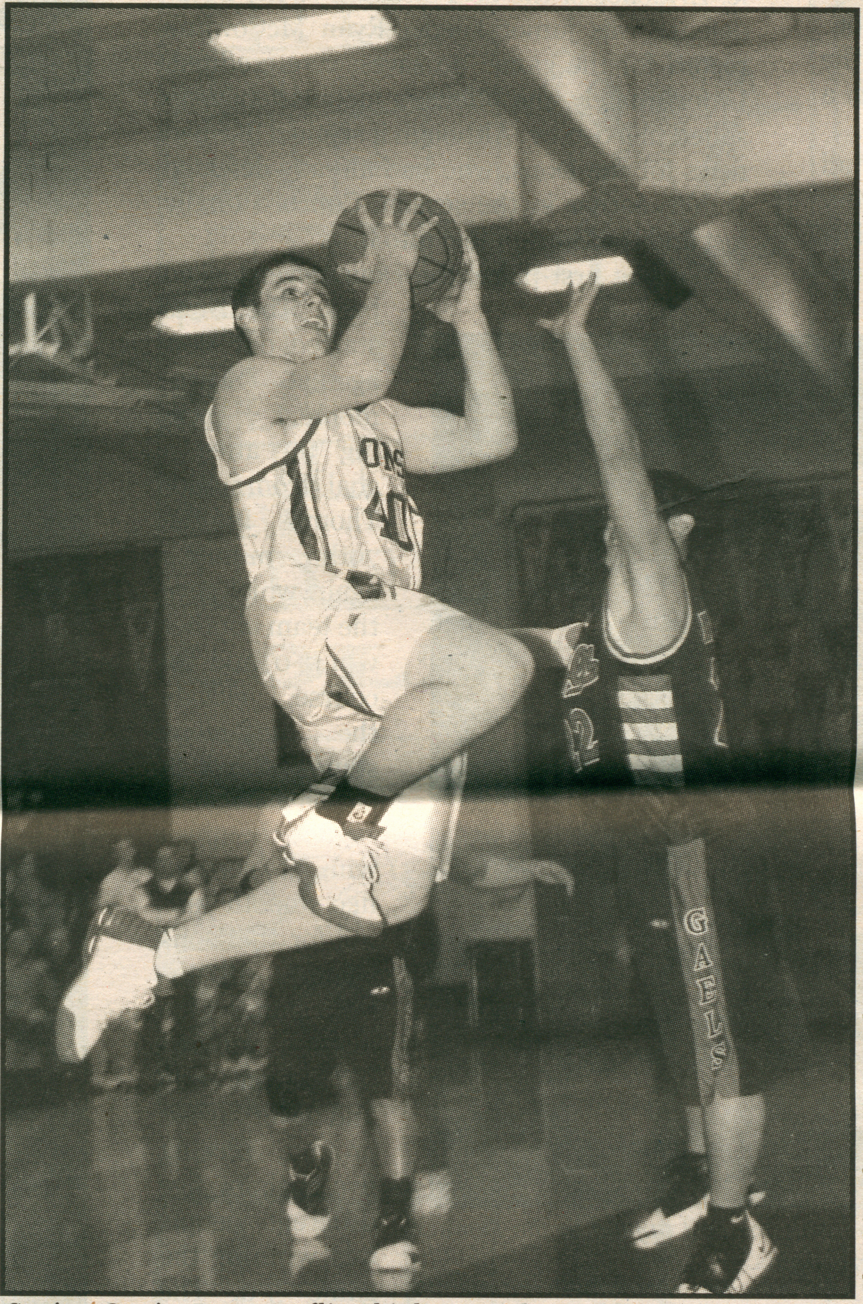
The team came out firing on all cylinders, steamrolling the Minutemen with 23 points in the third quarter, and a staggering 29 points in the final period. The defense, lead by Beeman, continued to stifle Concord and potential first team all-leaguer Jimar Dooley, holding the sharpshooter to a measly nine points, including only one long ball. The Dons outscored the Minutemen 52-23 in the second half as junior Jordan Fillmore, and seniors Mike Hammonds and Stephen Nigro all contributing 17, 11, and 10 points respectively.

The following week the Dons disposed of a pesky Northgate squad 57-46, holding off a strong surge by the Broncos late in the second half and continuing to play lights-out defense, limiting Northgate to four points in the second quarter. Jordan Fillmore continued his league MVP campaign, netting 26 points on 11 field goals.

The Dons traveled to Pleasant Hill to face off against the Falcons of College Park. The Falcons subdued the passive Dons after holding the offense to only 40 points.

"We came out really lazy and flat," said junior center Jordan Fillmore. "We thought we were going to roll through the game without a hitch, but College Park came to play."

The offense couldn't find its bearings and the defense was patchy at times during the defeat. The offense struggled during the middle of the game, only managing to score eight points combined in the second and third quarters. Despite a team loss, Fillmore continued to find the basket and finished the contest with 16 points.



Blueprint Photo/Bryan Schnugg

Senior Gavin Beeman flies high over the Dublin defense in the Dons' mind blowing 93-48 win.

Then came the fireworks. The often-dormant offense erupted, almost tripling their pre-season score of 33 (12/8 against Serra) during a 93-48 shellacking of the Dublin Gaels. The offense scored at least 20 points in every quarter during their season high scoring effort and were paced by Fillmore (20 points), and sophomore Scott Hampton, who made he wasn't overlooked by the rest of the league, netting a career high 17 points and providing the Dons with another high scoring threat.

The Dons continued to roll during their next game against Mt. Diablo scoring 81 during a 20-point victory over the Red Devils. Four players scored in the double digits lead by Fillmore (25), Nigro (16), junior Drew Daniel (15), and Hampton (10). The game, however, provided a scare for all of the Acalanes faithful when Beeman went down with an ankle injury. "I'm doing ok now, it's a little swollen, but I think that I can walk on it, so I'm just going to take it easy. I don't think I'll miss any games because of it," said Beeman.

If the Dons are going to make any noise in NCS, they will need their motivational leader back in the lineup down the home stretch. Next up for the Dons includes a difficult run against both Campolindo and Miramonte on the road and Las Lomas at home. For the Dons to be successful, according to Beeman, they will need to "take it one game at a time." With the season winding down, watch for the Dons to surprise some of the league perennial favorites, and they're going to do it one game at a time.

Good time for a turnaround: If the Dons had scored as many points as they did against Bishop O'Dowd (32) in every game, they would have needed nearly five and a half games to equal their recent 174-point two-game outburst.

Good Time for a Turnaround:
If the Dons had scored as many points as they did against Bishop O'Dowd (32) in every games, they would have needed nearly five and a half games to equal their recent 174-point two-game outburst.

Lowdown on the Showdown:
What: Acalanes vs. Miramonte
Where: Miramonte HS
When: February 10, 7 p.m.
Outlook: The Dons hope to make headway in their hopes for an NCS birth, and a victory over the Matadors would help that cause. The Dons prevailed in their first match with Miramonte 59-56 with Fillmore scoring 31. Look for another close match with the Dons edging out the Mats in a close, hard fought battle.
Prediction: Acalanes 67 Miramonte 66

Z
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Upset Win Turns Season Around

Unexpected defeat of league powerhouse puts a jump in the Dons' game

By Alex Wu
Layout Editor

*"I have missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I have lost almost 300 games. On 26 occasions I have been entrusted to take the game winning shot... and I missed. I have failed over and over and over again in my life. And that's precisely why I succeed." – Michael Jordan**

After struggling against the top three teams in the DFAL, the Acalanes Lady Dons basketball team has fought back into the hunt for an NCS berth. Starting seniors Molly Peterson, Lindsey Macfee, and Rose Palley have carried the young and inexperienced team on a winning streak. Nevertheless, the young freshmen squad of Katie Bruzzone, K.J. Croetch, and Ellie Cohen has been an essential part of the team.

Although sloppy basketball has plagued the Lady Dons in their quest for NCS berth, the three-ball has kept the Lady Dons alive in almost every game. In the first half of the season, the Dons have averaged 4.29 three's a game. Most of them have come from outside shooting aces, Molly Peterson and Katie Bruzzone. However, there has been a strong presence inside with Rose Palley, KJ Croetch, and Jillian Smith cleaning up the boards.

After a tough loss to league leader Northgate, the Lady Dons started a winning streak against the College Park Falcons. The Dons were able to clip the Falcons' wings as seniors Rose Palley, Lindsey Macfee, and Molly Peterson established the inside and outside game play. Rose Palley led the team with 16 points while Peterson and Macfee had 9 and 7 points, respectively. Senior Molly Peterson said, "We're improving a lot. Our practices are getting more rigorous, and we're going to be ready for anyone."

Blueprint Photo/Bryan Schmugg

Lady Dons' Katie Bruzzone drains 3 of her 21 points over a Dublin defender in the Dons' 67-62 win.

In every season and sport, there is at least one game each athlete looks back on to be inspired and to install hope. The game against the Dublin Gaels turned the Lady Dons' season around. Trailing 18-9 after the first quarter, things looked grim for the Acalanes as Dublin's Beth Pate and Trisha Campbell split the Dons defense and cut inside for easy layups. However, freshman Katie Bruzzone put the Lady Dons on her shoulders and rallied the Dons for a comeback. At the end of the third quarter the Dons were down 47-49. In the final two minutes of the game, the game ran into a bit of controversy. With the Dons leading 55-52, Dublin's Beth Pate dropped a three-ball after the shot clock had rung. The referees counted the three because they did not hear the buzzer. Furious, Coach Scott Murphey was able to pull things together to win the game 67-64. Bruzzone finished the game with 21 points and 3 three's. Bruzzone added, "We've gotten a lot better as playing as a team and we're doing really well."

Starting the second half of the season, the Lady Dons put up a fireworks display of dominance destroying the winless Mt. Diablo Red Devils in an 80-40 win. After a semi-slow start, the Lady Dons were able to piece together the puzzle and lead by 23 at recess. In the second half, the Dons left no prisoners and finished off the Red Devils. Senior Molly Peterson had two three's while junior Jillian Smith led the team with 14 hard earned points. The convincing win over Mt. Diablo kept the Lady Dons in a tie for third place with Alhambra and Dublin.

However, undefeated Northgate and powerhouse Miramonte still control the talent-laden DFAL. "We know what we need to do. We just need to get it done," said senior guard Lindsey Macfee.

With half a season left to play, seniors Sarah Clancy, Lindsey Macfee, Rose Palley, and Molly Peterson are hoping to make the most of the Lady Dons' season. With Lamorinda rival games against Campolindo and Miramonte and rematch against Northgate, the Acalanes Lady Dons basketball team will have to play perfectly in order to earn a shot at NCS.

* Not conducted by a Blueprint interview

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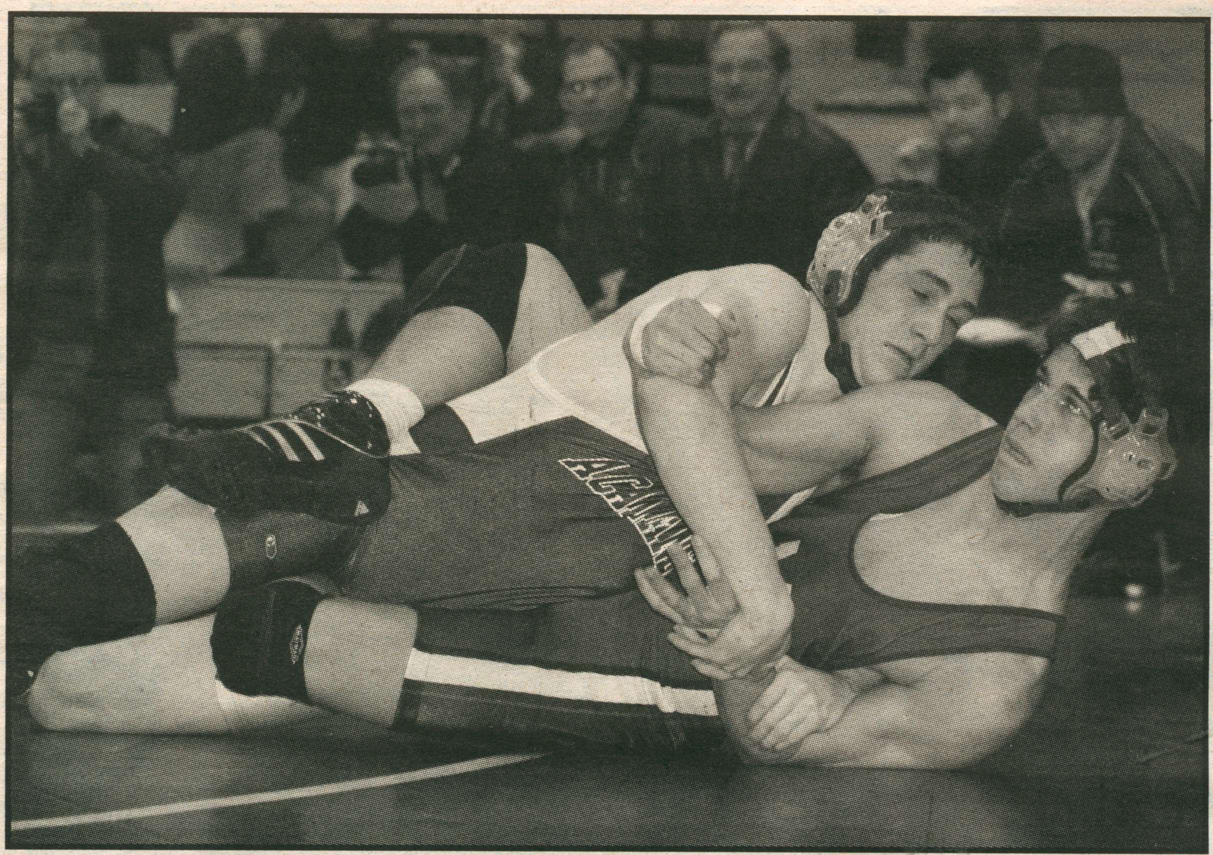
Seeing The Big Picture

Losses to Miramonte, Mt. Diablo fail to dampen spirits



Blueprint Photo/Ali Cellini

Junior Greg Weitzman turns a Miramonte opponent into a pretzel, however, the Dons were unable to savor the victory, losing 6-62.

By Sara Caldwell
Sports Editor

Despite a strong showing early in the season, the Dons have had a hard time carrying momentum into the last stretch, falling to undefeated Mt. Diablo, cross-town powerhouse Miramonte, league leader College Park and Alhambra.

Mt. Diablo, despite being a lospsided match up, showcased some of the Dons' brightest talents. Senior on Chapparo opened the meet in the 115 class with a win, pinning Mt. Diablo's Ritter in five minutes flat.

Junior Greg Weitzman handily defeated his opponent Callanda with characteristic dominance in 152's, scoring 12 quick points to his opponent's goose egg.

Senior Nick Carrel had a close match, but was able to prevail over his opponent 7-6 to give the Dons their third match win of the meet.

"It was one of the closest matches I've had," said Carrel. "The guy had pinned me in 59 seconds the Saturday before, so I came back looking to beat him.

He has also beat the number six guy in NCS, so it was a big win for me."

Unfortunately, the three wins were not enough to topple the undefeated Mt. Diablo, and the Dons fell 61-12, and 3-3 in DFAL.

A win came, however, when the Dons played host to the Dublin Gaels. Seniors Carrel, Chapparo, and Ben Hubbard all won their respective matches, Hubbard with a pin in just over a minute. Juniors Weitzman and Don Kephart, as well as sophomore Chris Newcomb helped boost their team to a 43-21 victory.

The Dons would also play host to a tough loss, this time to Lamorinda rival Miramonte, whose 6-1 record trails undefeated 7-0 Mt. Diablo and College Park.

Chapparo pinned his Matador opponent in just over three minutes, but the Dons failed to win another match after the opener, losing 62-6 and pushing their record into the red at 3-4-4.

The three way match-up with Alhambra and College Park was also a struggler. Despite match wins from Weitzman, Chapparo, Carrel and Francis, the Dons lost both matches, 68-12 and 60-17.

The Dons have not lost hope, however. The program that boasted its first win only two years ago is now standing at a stable fifth in league and is optimistic about the post-season.

In other words, the boys keep their eyes on the big picture. Many seniors on the team can remember the 0-9 2002-2003 season, and take pride in not only their individual accomplishments, but those of the team. Just last year, the boys were only able to post one league win - they have come a long ways to be looking at a respectable league standing, and it is in large part due to the dedication of the athletes in the program, as well as consistent coaching from head coach Bob Chance. "Hopefully it will be our first winning season," said Carrel. "We can do it if we can pull off wins against Northgate and Concord next week."

Dons' Defense Dominates

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win over Mt. Diablo.

Despite the goal, the Dons were still atop the DFAL heading in to one of the most important games of the season against rival Concord.

The Dons couldn't seem to stop the bleeding in the first half as Concord jumped out to a 2-0 lead. The muddy Concord field seemed to bog the Dons down, as the Minutemen were able to navigate their home potholes with much more ease. After a quick half-time talk, the Dons came out charging with Hertel scoring two goals to tie the game, but defense didn't help the cause this time and the Minutemen scored late in the game, sealing the deal and handing the Dons their second loss of the season, 2-3. Although it was a close game, it was rare form for the Dons defense to allow three goals in a game. The team ultimately came out of the battle with minimal scars, as Las Lomas beat College Park 2-1 keeping the Dons in first by five points.

Though the team stands at a secure 10-2-4 league record, there are still four other teams in the shadows of the Dons hoping to taste first place. With only a few games left in the season the Dons need to buckle down and concentrate on the upcoming games: "We really need to focus on these next couple games and hopefully we can come out in first," said goalie and co-captain McCowan.

These next few games are going to be essential for the Dons to maintain an impressive season and win the DFAL. Despite the loss to Concord, they are still the DFAL steam roller by five points. Assistant coach Edwin Mesones: "I think they should feel pretty good that they're the dominant team in the DFAL." Hopefully the boys can maintain their dominance against second place College Park in their next game and then wrap up the season on top with a win over Campolindo, both teams they have already beat.

Deja Vu: Joey Thomas scored a goal in a 1-0 win over Campo in the 79th minute and then repeated four games later against Miramonte and scored another goal in a 1-0 win that happened to be in the 79th minute.

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Dons Pick Up Steam, But is It too Late?

Lady Dons putting it together just as the season ends

By Aaron Kwan
Staff Writer

Ending the first half of the season with a demoralizing 3-0 shutout loss to Campo wasn't what the Dons had in mind, but after a nail-biting matchup against Miramonte, everything seems to be going in favor of Acalanes.

Against Campolindo, senior keeper Cassie Mullendore put up a solid six saves, but the drained Acalanes team couldn't pull through when they needed it most. Constantly attacking on defense and blowing Cougars out of her way, sophomore Jane Rhodes showed strength but just couldn't get her shots to count.

Junior Erika Wesley fends off a Campolindo defender, looking to assist a teammate upfield. Despite her effort, the Dons were offensively anemic, falling to the Cougars 0-3.

Blueprint Photo/Joe Dondero

She noted afterwards that each player must start taking it upon themselves to aid the team, which she tried to do as much as possible throughout the game. Rhodes *mentioned* that "we just need to gain confidence in ourselves," a recurring theme in the development of the struggling young team, "and definitely put more balls in the net."

After the upsetting loss to Campo, Acalanes tried to start out on the right foot in the second half of the season, facing Northgate, who beat the Dons 2-1 in a close DFAL opener in November.

Sophomore Kristy Adcock showed her trademark consistency and posted a one-spot on the scoreboard within the first ten minutes before halftime to tie it up at one goal apiece. There wasn't any more action from then on, and the Dons were handed their first tie of the season, 1-1.

The postponed away game against Concord was slated to be played on the Monday before finals, and the coaches agreed to have the game at Acalanes. Middle-of-the-road Concord was not expected to be a problem, but the fans found out otherwise. Despite a stellar performance by both star goalies, Desiree Mortensen from Concord and our own Cassie Mullendore stopping nine goals each, Mortensen prevailed.

As the clock wound down, the Dons looked as if they had wrapped up another tie, but with less than a minute to go, a goal slipped by Mullendore, leaving the Dons with nothing to show for their exceptional 79 minutes of defense.

The next game faced the 2-9 Alhambra Bulldogs, no match for the Dons, who put up three to keep DFAL hopes alive.

The titans of the league, Las Lomas, gave the Dons a defensive battle which unfortunately resulted in an all-too-familiar loss. Both teams played hard, but when it came down to the last minutes, the Knights pulled away. Las Lomas' Sara Noii scored on an assisted goal with eight minutes to go, and left devastation on the faces of the Dons. Upset by their nearness to an unthinkable upset, Acalanes was unable to reach the light at the end of the tunnel.

Two days before the face-off against Miramonte, the Mats were sitting pretty, having defeated Concord 8-0 and having handed Las Lomas their only loss of the season. The team knew it would be a tough game, especially in light of their 0-4 loss to the Mats earlier in the season. However, the Dons were not deterred.

Acalanes came thundering out of the gates to start the game. They played hard the first half on both ends of the field, but with ten minutes left in the half, the Mats fired a goal at Mullendore. The shot was blocked, but rebounded and pushed into the goal, putting the Dons down 0-1.

Perhaps the trip into the heated P.E. classroom at the half warmed up the Dons' intensity; they returned to the field yelling, cheering and bouncing. The passion was enough to raise the dead. Sophomore Emilie Bers said, "I could just feel the intensity... I knew we wouldn't settle for a loss."

With excitement so thick it could be cut with a knife, the ball was never in one place for very long in the second half. There were diving saves and power plays, but nothing was changing on the scoreboard. Bers was substituted in for sophomore Ali Collins, and before she stepped on the field, coach Tom Ginocchio had one thing to say: "Emily, I need a goal out of you." It was straight out of a movie – a few minutes later, with a pass from freshman Michelle Caine, Bers sunk the ball past the fingertips of the Miramonte keeper and right into the back corner of the goal.

Everyone on the bench and in the stands went nuts, and the photographer nearly dropped his camera. "It was like the best feeling in the world," said Bers, "I knew I had to score, and that's what I did."

Riding high off the tie with Miramonte, the girls grabbed two straight shutouts against Mt. Diablo and Concord, giving them a 7-7-2 DFAL record. For now, the Dons are focused on their challenging end of season schedule, and hoping to carry the winning momentum over into the rest of the season.

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Champs or Chumps?

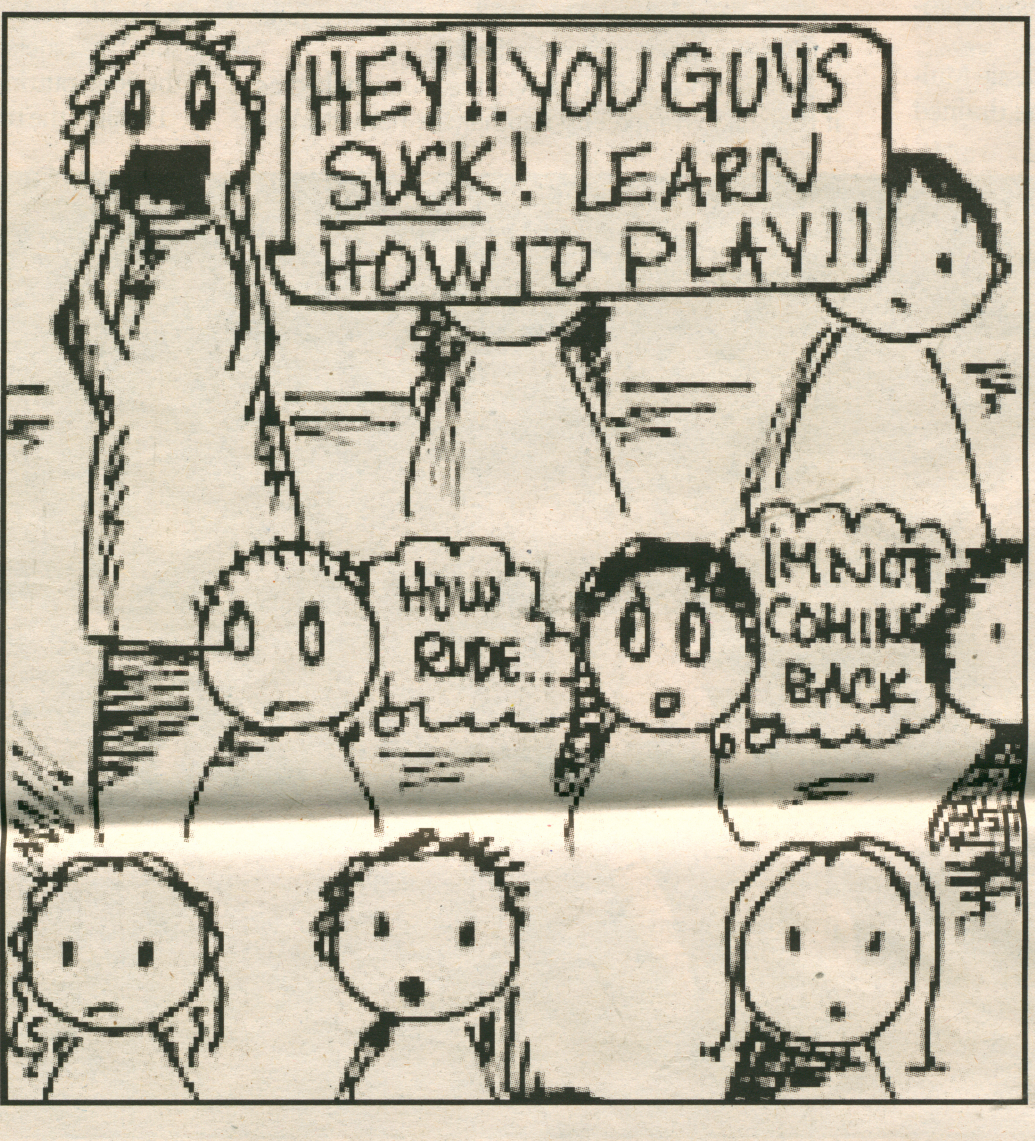
A look back at history as sportsmanship comes full circle

By Sara Caldwell
Sports Editor

Once notorious for rowdy antics and inappropriate behavior, Acalanes fans have undergone a revamping of attitudes. However, does the decline in negative behavior correlate to a decline in any behavior at all? Rather, are basketball games catching the same disease that school dances have ailed under, where rules and participation are inversely related?

Take a look back to March of 2001. The Dons were matched up with the Northgate Broncos in the Division III NCS semi-finals, and the Northgate gym was packed with fans on both sides. The game quickly turned ugly: chants of “thanks for playing”, “just like football”, “season’s over”, death threats at opposing players and a punch thrown at an Acalanes administrator breaking up a fight accumulated in a brick thrown through the Acalanes locker room after the game. One sign, directed at the son of the opposing coach, read “Daddy’s Little Princess”, and was followed up by a sign that read “And Our B----h Too.”

In other words, these aren’t times that most of us are interested in returning too. Something had to be done. The result was a standard rule of codes and conduct, which was created by the district to ensure that the focus of the game stayed on the players, and not on the fans. Attention belongs on the court, not on the stands: fans should be there to watch the game, not to draw attention to themselves and create conflict where none existed.


HEY!! YOU GUYS SUCK! LEARN HOW TO PLAY!!
HOW RUDE...
IMNOT COMING BACK

Blueprint Cartoon/Sophie Benjamins

As the code stands, students are not allowed to be on the court at any time, bring in equipment that may be distracting to the players (noise-makers, flags, balls or lasers) or paint their faces. Administrators use their discretion to what is appropriate and have the right to kick out any fan they deem to be acting inappropriately.

To prevent the continuation of pre-gaming into the actual game, students aren’t allowed return to the gym once they exit. The no-return privilege has prevented repeats of the Acalanes v. Miramonte polo championship game, where belligerently drunk Miramonte fans nearly fell in the pool on their way to the parking lot.

I’m all for enjoying yourself any way you want - just don’t bring it to a sporting event where people are trying to watch a game. Go stand in an elementary school parking lot, for goodness sake, and let me watch the game.

The implementation of rules has had a positive effect, to be sure. However, being forced to walk a line has traditionally deadened involvement. Take school dances as an example: the first dance after restrictions on freaking went into effect had a grand total *of 17 attendees, the majority* of which were dance committee members.

The two extremes, no rules with fanatic involvement and restrictions with apathy, have both been visited. If one had to be chosen, I would have been tempted to go with no rules – after all, I think people know where the line on their own. We may not be adults, I thought, but we know when a line is crossed, and we want basketball games to be fun, positive experiences.

My opinion changed seeing what things used to be like. The current student body has always operated under a set of behavior restrictions, and perhaps always resented them, but none of us remember what it was like to have death threats thrown at our players, to have physical fights on the gym floor, to have the safety of the team compromised as they change in the locker room.

I’m all for enjoying yourself at a basketball game, but fans have to remember they are there to watch the game, not to bring attention to themselves. Rules, while obnoxious, preserve the integrity of the game. Decreased attendance is a temporary ill – habits of rude behavior last much longer.

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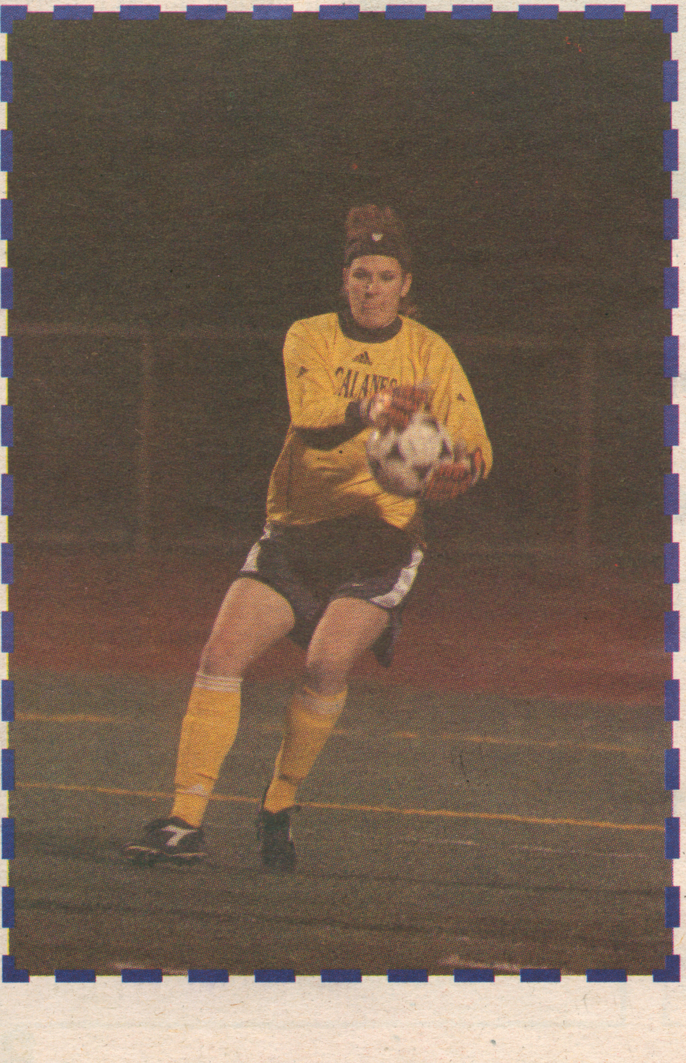
Athletes of the Issue

Kyle Hertel

The success of Acalanes boys' soccer this year has been an incredible achievement, and no small part of their offensive strength has been the contribution of senior Kyle Hertel. Consistently pushing on the opposite end of the field, Hertel has scored in nearly every game this year, sinking two against Las Lomas to start the season and posting a nearly unprecedented hat trick over San Jose High. His nose for the goal has turned him into one of the most feared players in the eyes of opposing goalies and for good reason. You are almost more likely to be struck by lightning or be attacked by a shark than to see a game without a point by Hertel. "He's a hard working, dedicated player," said fellow senior Nate Lapating. "He's been a big part of our success this year." Whether it's for an assist or a goal, Hertel's name is rarely absent from the box scores, and his presence is dominant on the field. With a combination of speed, agility, and a strong leg, Hertel has easily made himself a worthy MVP candidate. For his offensive potency and consistency contributions, Kyle Hertel is Blueprint's Athlete of the Issue.



Cassie Mullendore

Goalie isn't a glory position; they don't get the fame, the spotlight, or the recognition, but that's just fine with senior keeper Cassie Mullendore, the keystone of the Dons' team. As the lone senior on the squad, Mullendore provides experience and leadership for the young Dons squad. "Cassie is pretty quiet during the practices, but when we're in a game she makes her presence felt," said sophomore Christy Adcock. "All of the girls look up to her since she has the most experience." Many players would rather be the star who scores all of the goals; Mullendore would rather be the person they are trying to score on. Playing goalie means putting yourself on the line every night, because with one mistake, you can find yourself on the losing end of a 0-1 game nailbiter. Luckily for the Dons, they have a goalie that makes few mistakes. Mullendore has recorded five shutouts on the year including two consecutive against Mt. Diablo and Concord. For her commitment to perfection and her quiet leadership, Cassie Mullendore is Blueprint's Athlete of the Issue.